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ABSTRACT

This guide presents writing-focused learning projects and accompanying inquiry activities to help students pass the language arts/writing portion of the General Education Development(GED) Test 2002. The Introduction relates GED as project to the writing portion of the GED and explains how inquiry activities used Official GED Reading Practice Test questions as stimuli and can serve as models for teacher-designed activities. It introduces the template for writing inquiry activities, a series of steps and questions that fulfill the learner-centered thinking and process this guide proposes. Section 2, an introductory learning project that helps learners comprehend and internalize information about the GED, is entitled "GED Language Arts, Writing and You." The four inquiry activities are based on the template described in volume 1 of this series. The writing template is the basis for the inquiry activities found in the six learning projects: Writing the Rough Draft; Evaluating the Evaluation Standards and Your Essay; Revising for Clear Expression; Revising for Mechanics and Usage; Revising for Style; and Answering the Multiple-Choice Questions. (The template is a five-step inquiry process that consists of the following steps: identify the problem; become familiar with the problem; planning, assigning, and performing; sharing with others; and reflecting, extending, and evaluating.) Appendices include a scoring guide, sample essays, tips for improving peer review, frequently asked questions, and writing and teaching resources. (MO)

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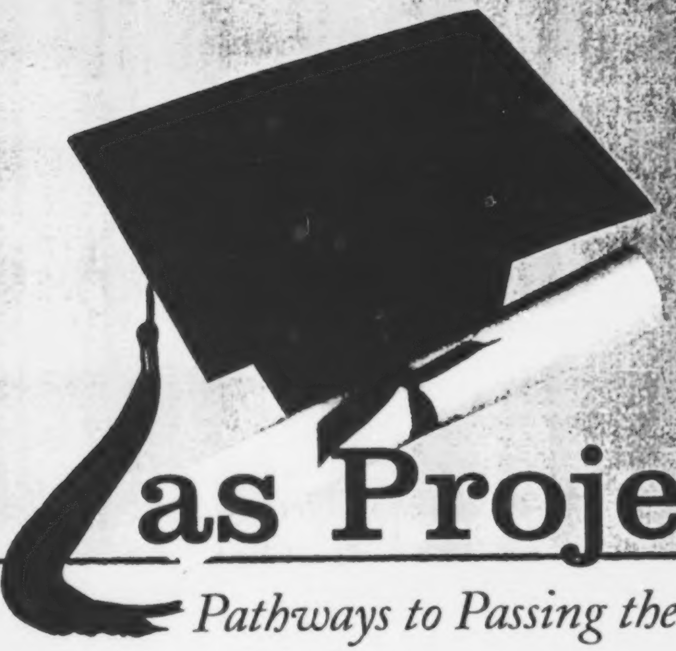

GED as Project

Pathways to Passing the GED

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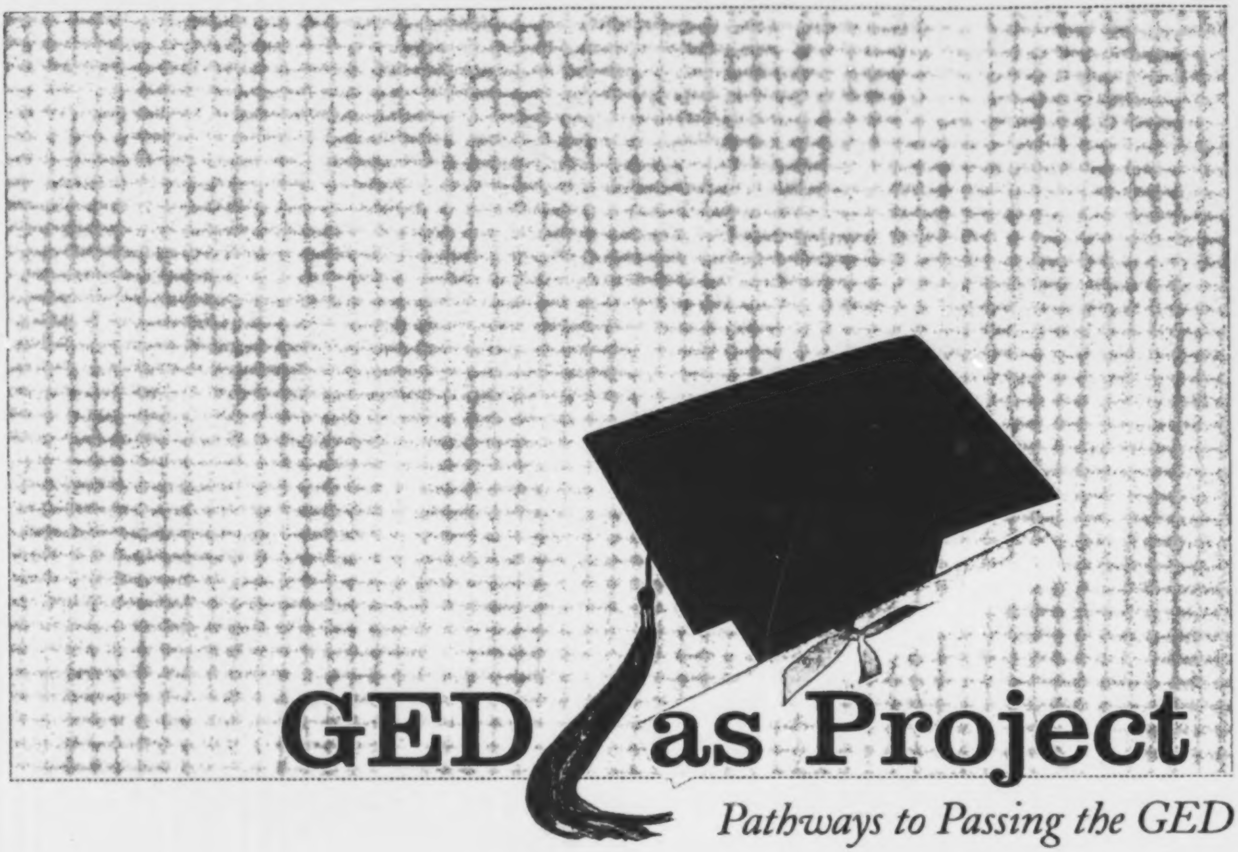
Volume 4

LANGUAGE ARTS, WRITING

CE 085 622

Volume ④: Language Arts, Writing



GED as Project

Pathways to Passing the GED

GED as Project

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At James Madison University
MSC 9801 – Blue Ridge • Harrisonburg, VA 22807
(888) 637-8494 or (540) 568-2930

At Virginia Literacy Foundation
700 E. Main Street, Suite 1620 • Richmond, VA 23219
(800) 261-9397 or (804) 225-7184

http://www.jmu.edu/gedproject

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Workforce Improvement Network

GED as Project: Pathways to Passing the GED was developed and written by the following Workforce Improvement Network staff and special consultants:

Workforce Improvement Network Staff

- Dr. Diane Foucar-Szocki - Director
- Barbara E. Gibson - Associate Director
- Marcia Phillips - Lead Specialist
- Edmund Vitale, Jr. - Curriculum Specialist
- John Anderson - Editorial Assistant
- John Vaughan - Technology Specialist

Special Consultants

- John M. Reier, Language Arts Consultant
- Tamara L. Jetton, Assistant Professor of Reading, James Madison University
- Dr. Kenn Barron, Assistant Professor of Psychology, James Madison University
- McCabe/Pillow Graphic Arts Studio - Design
- Norvell Communications - Project Management

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Preface

The GED high school equivalency exam has been available to adults for nearly 60 years. Yet, according to the 2000 Census, an estimated 1,000,000 adults in Virginia have neither completed high school nor taken the GED. They are at a disadvantage in our fast-paced, information-driven age, where formal learning and schooling are more important than ever. Helping those adults achieve success on the GED remains, as it has been for many years, a central tenet of adult education in Virginia and across America. The implementation of GED 2002 presents a unique opportunity for adult educators to help adults achieve their goal of attaining a GED. Now seems an appropriate time to examine current needs, practices and state of the art for preparing adults to pass the GED. We must take a fresh look not only at the subject matter, but also at the way it is taught.

We have examined the GED, its content, its structure, both old and new, and the skills embedded in the test. In addition, we have reviewed many current teaching methodologies. Our review has led us to propose *GED as Project: Pathways to Passing the GED* as a means of achieving effective results with adults pursuing their GED. As the name implies, the overarching principle of *GED as Project* is the value of project-based learning in adult education. We propose that the GED test itself can be a powerful project for those adults who choose to pursue it.

In Volume 1: Introduction, we describe our concept of the *GED as Project*, articulating the role of the instructor, the role of the individual, both as test taker and as learner, and the role of instructional materials in the classroom. We outline for instructors the necessary practices for using this approach. Central to *GED as Project* are the Inquiry Activities, designed to stimulate interest and discovery by the learner, facilitated by the instructor. Grouped together by the theme and/or skills to be explored, Inquiry Activities form the basis of Learning Projects. We define Learning Project and Inquiry Activity, provide a template or guide to use in developing Inquiry Activities, and provide sample Inquiry Activities for two Learning Projects: "GED and You" and "GED and You Revisited." In addition, we provide an annotated list of references for use with GED 2002.

In Volume 2: Math, we use items from an Official GED Practice Test to develop the Inquiry Activities that, grouped together, form the Math Learning Projects. Also included in this volume is a Learning Project called "GED Math and You," which has been designed as a companion to GED and You in Volume 1.

In Volume 3: Language Arts, Reading we again use an Official GED Practice Test to develop the Inquiry Activities that form the Language Arts, Reading Learning Projects. "GED Language Arts Reading and You" is included in this volume, offering the opportunity to explore this content area as well.

Volume 4: Language Arts, Writing uses the Official GED Practice Test to provide the subject material for essays and to develop revision techniques necessary for strong performance in the GED Language Arts, Writing test. The Scoring Guide is included in this volume to inform the learners on how the essays will be evaluated. "GED Language Arts Writing and You" is also included in this volume.

Through the learning approach advocated by *GED as Project*, the adult who seeks help in achieving the GED is regarded in two distinct ways: as test taker and learner. Using *GED as Project* allows instructors to facilitate the adult in the skill of taking tests, as well as the skill of learning. One helps the adults to pass a credentialing test; the other equips him or her both for life-long learning and competing in today's world – a win/win for all adults pursuing their GED.

Foreword

GED as Project: Pathways to Passing the GED has been developed through the hard work, dedication, and vision of many adult education professionals. Funded by the Virginia Department of Education, Office of Adult Education and Literacy, the Project was conducted by Virginia's Workforce Improvement Network (WIN), a partnership between James Madison University and the Virginia Literacy Foundation.

The first phase of this project included the development of the problem-based approach as presented in *GED as Project*, and the Math Learning Projects found in Volume 2. Phase two of the project includes the Language Arts, Reading and Writing, Volumes 3 and 4. Science and Social Studies will be published in the summer of 2004. Go to the *GED as Project* website at http://www.jmu.edu/gedproject to see the most current information about this project. Videos that illustrate how to use the *GED as Project* approach in the classroom are available to Virginia teachers through the Adult Learning Resource Center.

The project team members are as follows:

- Dr. Diane Foucar-Szocki - Research/Principal Investigator
- Barbara E.Gibson - Project Management
- Marcia Phillips - Lead Specialist
- Edmund Vitale, Jr. - Curriculum
- Susan Holt - Instruction
- John Anderson - Editorial Assistant
- John Vaughan - Technology Specialist

We are deeply appreciative of the consultants who guided and supported this phase of our work. Their commitment to the vision of *GED as Project* inspired the team to higher levels than we had imagined possible. Consultants for this phase of the project were:

- Dr. Tamara L. Jetton, Associate Professor of Reading, James Madison University
- John M. Reier, Lanuage Arts Consultant and author of *McGraw-Hill's GED Language Arts, Reading*
- Dr. Kenn Barron, Assistant Professor of Psychology, James Madison University.

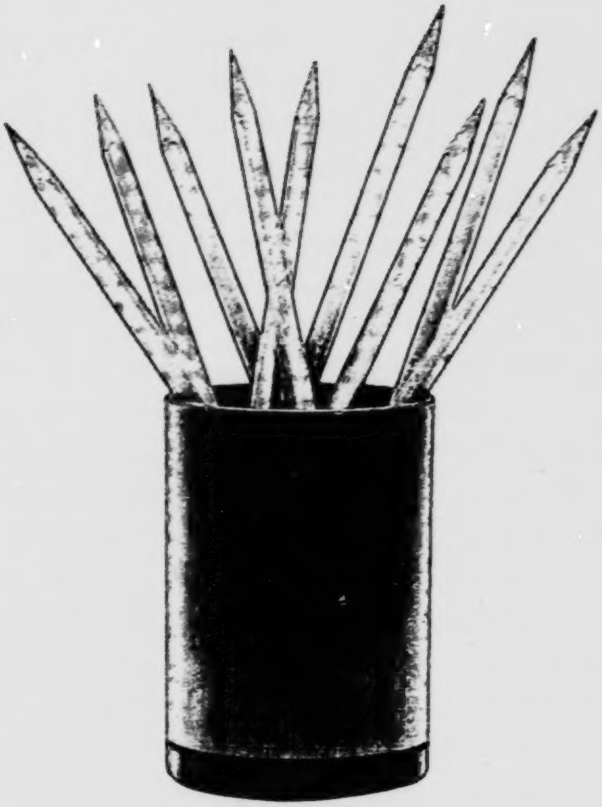
Field Testing of *GED as Project* was conducted with three adult education programs across Virginia. The instructors and administrators who participated in the field test not only used the materials we provided, they also made suggestions for varying approaches. They provided important insights and ideas to the project team. The adult learners who agreed to participate in the field test also contributed significantly to *GED as Project* by allowing us to collect samples of their work, sharing their thoughts and ideas while in the classroom, and giving valuable input during site visits. The field test sites and participating adult educators are:

- Northern Shenandoah Adult Education - Janet Frye, Coordinator. Instructors: Bobbie Eller, Paula Gould, Tonya Miller
- Prince William County Public Schools, Adult Education - Susan Garlock, Coordinator. Instructors: Eileen Rakshys, Vickey Logan, Debbie Caselli
- Regional Adult Education, Planning District 9 - Phyllis Metzger, Coordinator. Instructors: Susan Fox, Carol Robertson, Clysta Walters

The following deserve special recognition for their contributions to specific areas of the project:

- Gwen Smith, Specialist for Literacy Projects, Office of Adult Education and Literacy, Virginia Department of Education, who assisted in developing the concepts of both the Reading and Writing volumes, wrote the scripts for the videotapes accompanying *GED as Project*, and starred as Mrs. Harriman, the instructor.
- Jim Kennedy, consultant for the GED Testing Service for writing, and retired chairman of Montgomery County high school English Department, who guided us through the rationale of the development of the writing test and the scoring rubric.
- John Hodges, Production Manager, James Madison University, School of Media Arts and Design, who served as videographer for the project.

Finally, we wish to recognize Dr. Yvonne Thayer, Director of the Office of Adult Education and Literacy, Virginia Department of Education, for her commitment to the advancement of adult education practice and her dedication to the adults for whom the GED is a pathway to success as workers, parents, and citizens. Her desire for an articulated approach to teaching the new GED ultimately led to the development of *GED as Project*. We thank her for her leadership and her vision.



Introduction

This volume of *GED as Project* uses actual items and essay prompts from the Practice Test PA as the basis for the Learning Projects and applies an integrated approach to the teaching of writing similar to that established in *GED as Project: Pathways to Passing the GED*, Introduction and Math. In order to write a passing essay for the GED Language Arts Test, learners need to understand and use each stage of the writing process.

The Learning Projects presented in this volume move learners to an understanding of the stages of the writing process by making them slow down, plan, and organize their writing. As learners move through the sequence of Learning Projects, they are immersed in the development of a piece of writing from the earliest pre-writing strategies to the final moments of revision. One of the greatest strengths of this *GED as Project, Writing* approach to the writing process is that the Learning Projects break the writing process down into two tasks: Writing and Revising.

As has been the case with previous volumes of *GED as Project*, learners move through Learning Projects in a manner that incorporates previous learning into current learning. Learners begin the writing process simply, and every new Learning Project they work through incorporates that which has been learned previously. This method of building on previous knowledge provides learners with feelings of accomplishment and growth that encourage them to continue their learning.

Introduction to Writing: Learning Projects and Inquiry Activities

In the first two Writing Learning Projects, focus is placed on the steps needed to begin the writing process and on the writing process itself. In Learning Project 1, the writing process is laid out for learners in easy-to-follow activities: choosing a topic, generating relevant details, and organizing the details. After these pre-writing steps have been completed, learners begin to write the first draft of the essay. Learning Project 1 helps learners develop a solid foundation in the understanding of their topic and the development of their essay before beginning to write. These pre-writing strategies are crucial, as they allow learners to have their thoughts developed and organized before they write the first word. Learners can then turn their focus entirely to the writing.

Learning Project 2 presents learners with the Essay Scoring Rubric used by the official GED essay scorers. Knowing and understanding how their essays will be scored will help learners understand the importance of key elements of a passing essay. In Inquiry Activity 2-1, learners are presented with the Essay Scoring Guide and are made familiar with the criteria for a passing essay on the GED test. The next activity, Inquiry Activity 2-2, gives learners the opportunity to use the Essay Scoring Guide to evaluate and score an essay that has been provided to them. Inquiry Activity 2-3 continues to immerse the learners in the scoring rubric by encouraging them to evaluate their own writing and the writing of their peers using the Essay Scoring Guide. This final activity allows learners to see how their writing matches up to the criteria for a passing essay and lets them see where they need to improve. This step allows learners to work within the context of their own writing. Working in this context brings the learning closer to them both emotionally and intellectually. Getting feedback on their writing is the best way for writers to understand where to make improvements in their writing.

After learners have become immersed in the writing and evaluation processes, they need to learn how to go about improving and revising their writing. To achieve this end, the last three Learning Projects of this volume shift focus from writing to revising. With the shift to revision also comes the integration of the GED Language Arts, Writing Multiple-Choice test. These revision Learning Projects introduce the multiple-choice items from Practice Test PA as a means of exploring the various aspects of revision.

Learning Project 3 begins by focusing on clear expression, one of the most important aspects of a passing essay on the GED test. More than anything else, GED essay scorers are looking for essays in which the topic and supporting details are expressed clearly and thoroughly. Inquiry Activity 3-1 has learners identify areas in a passage from the Practice Test PA that are not clearly expressed or could be improved. Learners rewrite the passage for clarity. After rewriting, the learners are presented with multiple-choice questions from the PA that specifically address problems in the passage. Learners check what they have done with the passage against what the multiple-choice answer choices suggest. If their revisions match the correct answer, they have grasped the task. If they have revised incorrectly, a group or class discussion can be useful to help identify what is needed to revise correctly.

Learning Projects 4 and 5 continue the revising process. Learning Project 4 focuses on revising for mechanics and usage, and Learning Project 5 addresses style. Learning Project 6 focuses entirely on multiple-choice questions and is most appropriate for learners who are ready to take the GED test.

The *GED as Project* Approach to Writing

Writing and teaching writing are particularly difficult tasks. With other subject areas -- reading, math, science, and social studies -- the content is available from the beginning: the stories, the formulas, the facts. Teaching these subjects, while not easy, is a more straightforward matter of helping learners discover and interpret the content in front of them. Writing, however, is completely different. In asking our learners to write, we are asking them to start with nothing and end with something, and ultimately to end with something good enough to pass the GED essay test. But this can be a long and bumpy road. Essentially, we are asking our learners to write and to make their voices heard. Teaching writing is the art of encouraging our learners to look inside themselves, to think critically, and to make connections between themselves and the outside world.

The *GED as Project* approach helps learners make these connections. Volume 2: Math and Volume 3: Reading emphasize the strength of community and ask that students bring their real-life experiences into the classroom. Through group sharing and the reflection, extension, and evaluation steps of the *GED as Project* model, GED learners make connections and gain deeper understandings of learning by being more actively involved in learning.

In this volume of *GED as Project*, we focused on the same type of community-building activities as previous versions. As your learners work through the inquiry activities, we ask them to work together in developing ideas and strategies for starting writing, in doing the writing itself, and in revising. The *GED as Project* approach emphasizes the community of learning. This Writing volume is no different

Introduction to writing as a content area is best done by starting with GED Writing and You. The four Inquiry Activities in GED Writing and You offer the learners the opportunity to explore their feelings about writing, their awareness of what will be tested in the GED, and develop their action plan to improve their writing and pass the test. Also in GED Writing and You, we present a variety of idea-generating strategies: list making, free writing, brainstorming, and mind mapping. This Inquiry Activity was included here upon the advice of the field test teachers who felt the learners should be exposed to the skills of generating ideas before being introduced to the process of writing.

Woven throughout the Writing Learning Projects is a strong emphasis on the three components of essay writing -- focus, organization, and development -- that essay graders are looking for. These three components of the essay are critical to your learners when they write the essay on the test. If your learners have a foundation in developing a main idea and supporting details, organizing the main idea and supporting details, and focusing on the goals of their essay throughout, they will have a distinct advantage when they sit down to write their GED essay.

Two Major Requirements for Becoming a Competent Writer

Composition theory has proven that there are two requirements in helping learners become competent and successful writers. These two requirements should underscore any approach to teaching writing. They are:

1) The writer/learner must experience and become immersed in the act of writing.

This requires nothing more than simply doing writing: five or ten minute freewriting exercises, writing personal journals, or required essay writing every week. Give your learners the opportunity to write and give them time to do it.

As they arrive for class, have them sit down and freewrite on a prompt for five or ten minutes. Have them bring a reading journal to class, and ask them to write their reactions to materials they read in class. You may meet with some hesitation to write at first. Most people are cautious about expressing themselves or sharing their words and thoughts. This is a response to the way they have been taught to write in the past. Giving your learners the time to write and encouraging them to use the time effectively offers them a true service. The more experienced your learners are, the better they will write.

Peter Elbow, esteemed writing theorist and author of numerous writing texts, including *Writing Without Teachers* and *Writing With Power*, likens the process of writing to the process of cooking. To borrow his analogy: think about the first time you ever prepared a recipe. You were awkward and overly cautious. You wanted everything to turn out right, and there was a certain amount of anxiety that came along with all that was required of you to make that happen. You followed the rules very closely: a dash of this, a tablespoon of that. The recipe may or may not have turned out well, but the process was more than likely cumbersome, foreign, and strange.

Since that first awkward experience with a recipe, however, you have probably become more familiar with cooking. The process of getting the blend of ingredients just right has become much easier for you. You've lost the anxiety and the awkwardness you had that first time. Maybe you've done enough cooking since then that the process has become instinctive for you. You've been able to leave the recipes behind. You know how to cook.

Now, think back to your first writing experiences. Were they awkward? Were you overly cautious? Did you want everything to turn out right? Was there a certain amount of anxiety related to the process of writing? For most people, the answer is yes. Writing, like any other craft, is a process that takes time and experience to learn. Research has proven that students who are required to write in every class, or who write at least once a week, are significantly better writers than students who are required to write only one or two papers per semester. Give your learners the opportunity to write. They need it.

2) The writer/learner must be equipped with a metalanguage, particularly a language about his/her own writing.

Writers need to know how to talk about their writing. This is mandatory to succeed as a writer. Learners need to understand what it means when someone tells them they have a typo, or that a subject and a verb disagree. Giving your learners an awareness of what they are doing by helping them name it is essential to the learning-to-write process.

To go back to the cooking analogy, think about the language that is required to understand a recipe. You need to understand the order of ingredients. You need to understand the difference between a teaspoon and a tablespoon. You need to know the difference between the words whip and mix. These cooking terms are all required terms if you are going to succeed in the cooking process. It can take time to learn these terms, and the best way to learn is through the practice of cooking.

The Writing Process

This volume of *GED as Project: Pathways to Passing the GED* has been written with both of these requirements in mind. Our Learning Projects focus on allowing learners to work with their own writing as a means of achieving an understanding of what it takes for them to become competent writers. The focus on writing in GED 2002 is a focus on writing an essay competently. It is important to draft a well-organized essay that establishes a purpose and follows through on that purpose in a clear and concise manner. Rote memorization of grammar rules and drill worksheets may help learners understand the rules of grammar, but it will not help your learners learn to write. Your learners may write an error-free essay that is unclear, confusing, and uninteresting. It will not be a passing essay.

Teaching grammar should not be done in isolation, as it has been done traditionally. Grammar instruction needs to be addressed within the context of a learner's writing. Identify the deficiencies of your writers by looking at the problems they have in their writing, and address these deficiencies within the context of that writing. Learners are more likely to be interested if they can see how a grammar rule affects their own performance as writers.

Our intention in helping learners prepare for GED 2002 has been to demystify the process of writing. Too often our learners have been led to believe that writing is an innate ability. They think, "You're either a good writer, or you're not." They have also been led to believe that writing is a magical act in which a writer sits down at a computer, writes, and as the words come out, they are concise, eloquent, perfect, and finished, never to be touched again by the writer. With this in mind, our learners sit down to write, find it impossible to create perfection on the first try, get frustrated, and quit.

While writing may come more naturally for some, it is by no means a process that just happens. Writing takes practice. For many it is a lifelong pursuit. Talk to your learners about the process of revision. Let them know that writing is not a natural ability. Show them a sample of your writing as it ascended from the murky depths of the first draft to the eventual shining glory of the final draft. Show them that writing is just as much a process of revision as it is of coming up with the ideas.

The revision step must come after the writing has been done. The editing function is one that looks for errors and problems in the writing, thus inhibiting the creative process. Helping learners free up that creative process will allow them to more easily generate words and ideas.

In many ways, writing exceeds the other subject areas of education in difficulty because it is, for lack of a better term, contentless. Not until something has been written does writing have a body of content to work with. It is the job of our learners to create this content, and it is our job to help them create. Have your learners work through the Learning Projects in this volume. Include burst lectures when they are lost or confused.

Most importantly, give them plenty of opportunity to write and revise, and encourage them in these processes.

In an effort to focus national attention on the teaching and learning of writing, the College Board - a nonprofit membership organization composed of more than 4,300 schools and colleges - established the National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges. In their report, issued April 2003, the Commission states:

> American education will never realize its potential as an engine of opportunity and economic growth until a writing revolution puts the power of language and communication in their proper place in the classroom. Yet, although many models of effective writing instruction exist, both the teaching and practice of writing are increasingly shortchanged throughout the school and college years. Disciplines such as mathematics, history, science, and foreign language properly deserve the attention they receive. This Commission holds no brief for the idea that writing can be improved while substance is ignored. Still, writing is how students connect the dots in their knowledge. And writing, always time-consuming for student and teacher, is today hard-pressed in the American classroom.

"Writing today is not a frill for the few, but an essential skill for the many."

– The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges

The Writing Template

1) Identifying the Problem

Step 1 of the writing template addresses two tasks that are crucial to beginning the writing process. The first task is recognizing the topic of the essay to be written. In the GED test, writers will be presented with a prompt, a very general statement upon which writers can develop a personal essay. The second task is identifying the prospective audience of one's writing. Step 1 helps learners understand that their essay will be read by two readers who will be assessing their writing according to a set of evaluation standards.

In this step, learners are asked to read the writing prompt and the directions carefully and to identify any areas they do not understand. Misreading the topic is a frequent mistake that causes test-takers to not pass the GED Language Arts, Writing test. As in the other *GED as Project* subject areas, we ask learners to slow down, read carefully, and become grounded in the material with which they are presented.

2) Becoming Familiar with the Problem

The second step of the *GED as Project* writing template targets the research stage of the writing process. Before writing can begin, writers research the essay topic to provide themselves as much information and detail as possible. This step requires considering all possible topics, exploring the details of the topics, and thinking about how to present the topics to the intended audience. While GED essay topics do not require research in the traditional sense, they do require some thought. In identifying a topic to write about, learners are asked to think about subjects they are already familiar with. Learners are asked to choose topics that they would feel comfortable teaching to others. These topics tend to hold the most detail and meaning for learners.

3) Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning

Based on the work they have done in Steps 1 & 2, learners will develop a writing plan.

Assigning

This would generally be an individual activity so there would be no assigning of tasks.

Performing Tasks

Doing the Work

The first two Learning Projects place focus on preparing to write, the writing process itself, and evaluating essays based on the scoring rubric used on the GED Language Arts, Writing test. Beginning in Learning Project 3 the focus shifts to the process of revising an essay.

- ***Writing***

Here learners will begin the actual writing of the essay. Learners begin by developing a list of topics they know well enough to teach others. From there, they narrow down the list to a handful of topics that they know very well and continue by choosing one topic they know and understand better than any other.

Once the final topic, the topic for the essay, has been decided, learners are asked to develop a list of details that describe, characterize, and summarize the topic. Using a number of detail-generating techniques, learners develop a long list of details they can use in their essay.

After the details have been generated, learners revisit the list and remove all of the irrelevant details. Learning to separate relevant details from irrelevant details is one of the most important elements of good writing. Learners need to understand that some details are interesting, but they do not serve a purpose in the essay. Once the irrelevant details have all been removed, learners begin the process of organizing the relevant details into groups based on their similarities.

All of this pre-writing work pays off when the learners start to write their first draft. Having a well-developed topic accompanied by supporting details helps the learners focus on the act of writing. Instead of thinking of details on the fly, learners already have everything they need to write in front of them.

- ***Revising***

The last three Learning Projects focus on developing skills in revision. These projects break down the revision process, allowing learners to focus on one aspect of revision at a time – organization, clear expression, mechanics and usage and style. Ultimately, learners integrate their learning to incorporate all of these aspects of revision at once.

The multiple-choice portion of the GED Language Arts test is actually a test of revision skills. As such, the revising Inquiry Activities integrate the multiple-choice items from the Practice Test PA into the process of revising one's own work. The result is that, in addition to the learners gaining skills in revising their own writing for clear expression, organization, mechanics and usage, and style in their own work, they are also equipped to answer the multiple-choice questions on the test.

In test-taking circumstances, learners take the multiple-choice test first. The GED test designers developed the test in this way because they want to see that test takers have honed the revision skills necessary for revising their own essays in the second portion of the writing test. The skills learned in this step of the writing template allow learners to experience revision not only within the context of their own writing, but also in the multiple-choice format of the test.

4) Sharing with Others

Sharing with Others is an activity that every GED content area shares in the *GED as Project* approach. Communicating an understanding of the writing process reinforces the learners' ability to use and make meaning of the process. Discussing writing and the approaches taken in the writing process helps learners think through their processes more thoroughly than keeping it all internalized. Having learners share their writing and their strategies places them in the role of teaching others. It is our continued belief that one learns best when one teaches.

In this step, learners discuss and report to the class how they approached the writing process, how what they have learned may benefit them in their daily lives, and any of the questions covered in Steps 1 through 3. Learners should be encouraged to lead the class in discussion and to share what they know and what they have learned. Doing so allows learners to further build their communication skills while extending what they have learned by teaching it to others.

5) Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Step 5 in the template is devoted to the learner, whose aim is broader than that of simply a test-taker. The learner is encouraged to learn the process of writing through the activities presented in *GED as Project, Volume 4.* An important reason for continuing beyond step 3 in each IA is to allow the learners to apply what has been learned to other types of writing, both test-based writing and real life writing. Learners have to explore other ramifications of the process of writing in order to handle the essay portion of the GED test. Step 5 gives the learners that chance.

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Each reflecting step is introduced with the following comment to reinforce this very important thinking skill:

> *Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.*

Reflecting questions tend to be analytical in Sternberg's *Successful Intelligence* model. There are numerous issues you can ask learners to reflect on, including:

- Thinking skills learned
- Why writing is important
- What has surprised them about the writing process
- Test-taking skills developed

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

Learners now get a chance to build on the knowledge gained by making connections to the world around them. Understanding the generation of ideas, the importance of strong supporting details, and the power of the revising process are all important in gaining a deeper understanding of writing concepts. These concepts are important not just in test writing, but also in everyday practical writing. The skills learned in this writing volume of *GED as Project* help learners think like writers, a kind of thinking that learners will carry with them far beyond the GED test.

All of these extending activities can be done in groups and reported to the rest of the class.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

Each evaluating step is introduced with the following comment to reinforce this highest thinking level in Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy:

> *In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers in these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.*

The evaluation process is similar to the reflecting process, but it tends to be more personal to each learner. Here are some questions that could be asked. These questions tend to be analytical in Sternberg's *Successful Intelligence* model.

- What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.
- What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?
- What kinds of essay writing strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?
- What have you learned about revising?

The Inquiry Activity template is dynamic and can be applied to different situations in multiple ways.

The Appendices contain:

A) The GED Scoring Guide
B) Sample Essays
C) 5 Tips for Improving Peer Review
D) Frequently Asked Questions about the GED
E) Writing and Teaching Resources

Student versions of all of the Inquiry Activities that follow may be downloaded from the *GED as Project* web site: http://www.jmu.edu/gedproject.

The Writing Template

1. Identifying The Problem

2. Becoming Familiar With The Problem
   - ***Developing***
   - ***Organizing***

3. Planning, Assigning, And Performing Tasks
   - ***Writing***
   - ***Revising***

4. Sharing With Others

5. Reflecting, Extending, Evaluating

Learning Project

GED Language Arts Writing and You

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity #1: Exploring Your Experiences with Language Arts, Writing

1. Identifying the Problem

This activity is started after the class has taken the GED Language Arts Writing Practice Test. This portion of the activity is done individually.

The problem you will be exploring involves the following question:

> *What are some of the things you know about Language Arts, Writing, and what are some of the things you want to know?*

As in other Inquiry Activities, this first step asks that you not answer the question at once, but make sure that you understand the question being asked. If you want to discuss your understanding of the question with others, please do so.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

This second step starts the process of thinking about what you already know about the subject. Take some notes on what you know about the question. To help you, consider the following questions.

These questions are designed as prompts for a class discussion. Use only those which you think will spark a good discussion and begin the learners' thinking about writing.

1. *Think about the experience you have just had in taking the GED Language Arts, Writing Practice Test. Don't think about whether you got an answer right or wrong, but focus on what kind of writing was on the test and how you reacted to it. Make some notes on your recollections.*
2. *Think back beyond the GED Language Arts, Writing Practice Test you just took and recall your reactions when you looked at the test in the GED and You experience, which may have been some time ago.*
   - *What were your thoughts and reactions while taking the Language Arts, Writing test?*
   - *What writing seemed familiar to you? Had you written essays like these before? Had you answered questions like these before?*
   - *What writing seemed unfamiliar to you? What was not familiar to you, for example: specific words, topics, the essay, or kinds of questions?*
3. *Think back to your school experience. Recall when learning to write was fun. When did writing become more challenging?*
4. *When you think of English classes, what do you remember? What kinds of materials were you asked to write? What did teachers do to help you? What did teachers do that was not helpful?*
5. *What else do you remember about writing and school?*

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning

This is an individual activity. You can think about how you will organize your thoughts and recollections to answer this question.

Performing Tasks

Doing the Work

Think a little more about the experiences you had in writing in this GED class and in school. Write down the thoughts that go through your mind as you remember those experiences. Write down notes to the following questions:

- *How do you feel when you think about writing?*
- *How do you feel when you think about taking the GED Language Arts, Writing test?*
- *What are some things you know about writing, and what are some things you want to know? Make a list of your answers to these questions divided into the following two categories:*
  - *What I know about writing*
  - *What I want to know about writing*

Reaching a Conclusion

Now form groups. Each group will do the following:

- *Using the lists that were developed individually by group members, develop a list of writing subjects that the group knows about.*
- *Besides grammar, what other aspects of writing do you have questions about? List as many as possible.*
- *Discuss some of the feelings you had when you talked about writing and language arts in school.*

The group should prepare its lists for presentation to the class and decide if it wants to discuss the emotional reactions the group members had to writing at school.

4. Sharing with Others

Each group will present its lists to the rest of the class and be prepared to lead a class discussion if there are questions or comments from the class.

The instructor will lead a discussion after the groups have made their presentations that references and pulls together some of the following items among all the groups:

- Class members' grammar and writing strengths.
- Class members' lists of other aspects of writing they are good at or would like to know more about.

Lead a discussion on writing experiences that create anxiety and concern among class members. If there is a lot of discussion among class members about writing anxiety, then you might want to develop an Inquiry Activity that allows the learners to explore some of their experiences and how they might be overcome, working alone or with others in the class.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

In this section the questions are divided so learners can think about what they experienced, extend their learning experiences to new contexts, and evaluate their learning. The kinds of questions used to accomplish this kind of thinking are the analytic, creative, and practical questions discussed by Robert Sternberg in his book, *Successful Intelligence.*

In general, creative and practical questions are most useful in the Extending subsection. Analytical questions are most useful in the Reflecting and Evaluating subsections. Use your own questions in these areas that may come from your Just-In-Time assessment or comments made during the sharing portion of the Activity.

If you feel that the learners are sufficiently confident, they may lead this discussion. You, as an instructor, are a member of the class and should participate in the discussion. This is a wonderful opportunity for Just-In-Time assessments.

Reflecting: Think about what you learned.

These questions tend to be analytical in Sternberg's *Successful Intelligence* model.

1. *What new discoveries have you made about GED Language Arts, Writing?*
2. *What impact do you think your emotional reactions to Writing and Language Arts have when learning the subject?*
3. *What impact do you think your emotional reactions to Language Arts, Writing have when you take a writing test?*
4. *What are the areas of writing you will need to work on most?*
5. *Make a list that will show how you will work to prepare for the GED Language Arts, Writing Test. Share your plan with someone.*

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

These questions tend to be creative and practical in Sternberg's *Successful Intelligence* model.

1. *Think about how you feel in a class that you like.*
2. *How do you feel in that class, and how can you transfer that feeling to a class you may not like, like Language Arts, Writing?*
3. *Think about the things you like to write. List them. How can you make Language Arts, Writing more like writing the things you like?*
4. *Before stories become movies, they are written down. Think about a movie or TV show you really like. Write a scene for characters in that movie or TV show. How can this help you in writing for the GED test?*

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

These questions tend to be analytical in Sternberg's *Successful Intelligence* model.

1. *If you have a negative reaction to Language Arts, Writing, writing for a test, or writing in general, what do you think causes that reaction?*
2. *How do you think you could overcome that reaction?*
3. *How do you feel about your motivation to pass the Language Arts, Writing portion of the GED test?*
4. *How will you study for Language Arts, Writing?*
5. *How did this activity work for you?*
6. *How might you improve this activity?*

Learning Project

GED Language Arts Writing and You

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity #2: Understanding and Following Directions

1. Identifying the Problem (Essay Directions and Topic)

Most students are nervous about writing the essay. In this Inquiry Activity, your students will look carefully at the actual directions for writing the essay. Numerous instances have been documented of writers writing excellent essays on topics in no way related to the prompt.

Read these directions that are found in the GED Language Arts, Writing Test. You will be asked to re-read these directions in more detail later and answer questions about them. DO NOT WRITE the essay called for in the Topic Box; you will do that in the first Writing Learning Project.

LANGUAGE ARTS, WRITING, PART II

Tests of General Educational Development

Essay Directions and Topic

Look at the box on the next page.

You must write on the assigned topic ONLY.

Mark the letter of your assigned topic in the appropriate space on your answer sheet booklet. Be certain that all other requested information is properly recorded in your answer sheet booklet.

You will have 45 minutes to write on your assigned essay topic. If you have time remaining in this test period after you complete your essay, you may return to the multiple-choice section. Do not return the Language Arts, Writing Test booklet until you finish both Parts I and II of the Language, Arts Writing Test.

Two evaluators will score your essay according to its overall effectiveness. Their evaluation will be based on the following features:

- Well-focused main points
- Clear organization
- Specific development of your ideas
- Control of sentence structure, punctuation, grammar, word choice, and spelling

REMEMBER, YOU MUST COMPLETE BOTH THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (PART I) AND THE ESSAY (PART II) TO RECEIVE A SCORE ON THE LANGUAGE ARTS, WRITING TEST. To avoid having to repeat both parts of the test, be sure to do the following:

- Do not leave the pages blank
- Write legibly **in ink** so that the evaluators will be able to read your writing
- Write on the assigned topic. If you write on a topic other than the one assigned, you will not receive a score for the Language Arts, Writing Test.
- Write your essay on the lined pages of the separate answer sheet booklet. Only the writing on these pages will be scored.

IMPORTANT:
You may return to the multiple-choice section after you complete your essay if you have time remaining in this test period. Do not return the Language Arts, Writing booklet until you finish both Parts I and II of the Language Arts, Writing Test.

Topic A

Suppose you had the opportunity to teach something you know to someone else.

In your essay, identify what you would teach and explain how you would teach this. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

Part II is a test to determine how well you can use written language to explain your ideas.

In preparing your essay, you should take the following steps:

- Read the **DIRECTIONS** and the **TOPIC** carefully.
- Plan your essay before you write. Use the scratch paper provided to make any notes. These notes will be collected but not scored.
- Before you turn in your essay, reread what you have written and make any changes that will improve your essay.

Your essay should be long enough to develop the topic adequately.

[End of GED Essay Directions and Topic]

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

1. What do you already know about the essay portion of the GED Writing test?

2. What are your thoughts about how you would go about writing an essay on the test?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning

As a group, discuss the questions that are asked in Doing the Work below, and clarify any different understanding of the questions.

Performing Tasks

Doing the work

Reread the Essay Directions and Topic keeping these questions in mind. Individually or in pairs, read the passage carefully and answer the questions below. Support your answers with your reasons and references to the passage.

1. *Do you have to finish and turn in the multiple-choice part of the writing test before you start the essay? Where in the GED directions do you find support for your answer?*
2. *How will the essay evaluators know which essay topic you are writing on? Where in the GED directions do you find support for your answer?*
3. *What is the length of time you have to complete your essay? Does this time include the multiple-choice test questions also? Where in the GED directions do you find support for your answers?*
4. *What are the four features that your essay will be evaluated on? Where in the GED directions do you find support for your answer?*
5. *What steps does the GED Essay Directions and Topic suggest for you to follow in preparing for your essay? Where in the GED directions do you find support for your answer?*
6. *How many words should your essay be? Where in the GED directions do you find support for your answer?*
7. *Do you have to write the complete essay on the first try? Where in the GED directions do you find support for your answer?*
8. *Do the GED Essay directions say anything about your handwriting? Where in the GED directions do you find support for your answer?*

List any information that was new to you.

List new questions that you may have that are not answered by the Essay Directions and Topic.

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *Compare your answers to others in the group. Discuss why you chose the answers you did and how you found them. Agree on the correct answers and the support you found in the passage for the answers. Make a list of the new information that group members found in the directions. Make a list of the new questions group members have and discuss some possible answers. Discuss the strategies for taking the essay portion of the test that match the directions.*

Whole Class: *Report to the class the answers to the questions, the references in the directions that support the answers, the information from the directions that were new to group members, the further questions about the GED essay test that group members now have, and the strategy or strategies the group has decided it would use to complete the essay portion of the test.*

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How good are you at reading and following directions?

Did your review of the directions give you new information about the GED essay?

Did you learn anything about writing strategies in reading these directions?

Developing good writing strategies will be of primary importance to your students. These can develop the students' confidence in being able to write a good essay on any general topic.

Are you strong in writing, or is writing something that you don't feel confident in doing?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information presented in the Practice Test question to other information or situations.

Give some examples where you had to follow directions at home.

Give an example of a situation you encountered when there were directions and you didn't follow them. What were the results?

Give an example of directions that were hard to understand. Why were they hard to understand?

Based on the directions for the GED essay, explain in greater detail the strategies you will use to prepare for the essay portion of the GED Writing test.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

How important is following directions to passing the GED test?

Ink, topic, page, and notes are all very important to an essay getting passing marks.

Evaluate the "Essay Directions and Topic."

Are they understandable to you?

Can you follow them easily?

Were the "Essay Directions and Topic" helpful to you?

Which part of the directions was most helpful? Explain.

Which part of the directions was least helpful? Explain.

Learning Project

GED Language Arts, Writing and You

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity #3: Developing Your Writing Action Plan

1. Identifying the Problem

Your task in this Inquiry Activity is to look at the section of the Action Plan that deals with writing called My Writing Action Plan. The questions asked in the Writing section of the Action Plan are:

1. *With which kinds of writing am I most familiar?*
2. *What do I want to know about writing?*
3. *How can I develop strategies to help with my writing?*
4. *How can I use my thinking skills to help with the questions?*
5. *How can I use my test-taking skills in the multiple-choice section of the Language Arts, Writing part of the GED?*
6. *What parts of the "GED and You" Action Plan can I use in this Writing Action Plan?*

Again, don't start doing the work; start instead to think about your understanding of the questions. Ask others if you need clarification.

2. Becoming Familiar With the Problem (Individually)

Review the work you did in Inquiry Activity #1 of this Learning Project.

Review the Action Plan you developed.

Review the questions in the writing portion of the Action Plan listed above. Make some preliminary notes about what you already know about the subject.

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning
This is an individual activity. Plan how you are going to approach the task of answering the questions.

Performing

Doing the Work
Start to think of a way to develop an Action Plan for GED Language Arts, Writing.

Reaching a Conclusion
Develop your Language Arts, Writing Action Plan.

4. Sharing with Others

This activity is designed to help build awareness of the Language Arts, Writing portion of the GED, the writing activities focused on in the test and how the student interacts with them. Becoming aware of these issues is an important part of the learning process. The multiple-choice section challenges many test-takers, since it deals as much with style as it does with grammar, and the five choices from which the test takers must select do not fall within the same context.

Discussing the issues is important too. Everyone should share his or her Writing Action Plan with the instructor. The Plan should indicate that the learner's understanding has deepened, each in different ways. One person's insight, whether instructor's or classmates', might help someone else's understanding.

Decide if you would like to share your work with a partner, a group, or the class. You will be asked to share your revised plan with your instructor.

5. Reflecting, Extending, Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about what you have learned.
These questions tend to be analytical in Sternberg's *Successful Intelligence* model.

1. *What new discoveries have you made about the GED, thinking skills, and writing?*
2. *What questions do you now have about the GED, thinking skills, or writing?*

Extending: Extend what you have learned to new situations.
These questions tend to be creative or practical in Sternberg's *Successful Intelligence* model.

1. *Develop a new set of questions for the Writing Action Plan.*
2. *Who at work or in your neighborhood might be able to help you study writing?*

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.
These questions tend to be analytical in Sternberg's *Successful Intelligence* model.

1. *How do you feel about your motivation to pass the writing portion of the GED?*
2. *Has your motivation to pass the GED increased?*
3. *How are you going to study for writing?*
4. *Are you writing any more outside of class? If so, how might that help you improve your writing skills?*

Learning Project

GED Language Arts, Writing and You

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity #4: Getting Ready to Write Essays

1. Identifying the Problem (Essay Directions and Topic)

In this Inquiry Activity, we will be working with various ways to start writing and organizing essays. We will begin by reviewing the instructions we first saw in GED Writing and You.

Do not write the essay called for in the Topic Box; you will do that in the first Writing Learning Project.

LANGUAGE ARTS, WRITING, PART II
Tests of General Educational Development
Essay Directions and Topic

Look at the box on the next page.

You must write on the assigned topic ONLY.

Mark the letter of your assigned topic in the appropriate space on your answer sheet booklet. Be certain that all other requested information is properly recorded in your answer sheet booklet.

Two evaluators will score your essay according to its overall effectiveness. Their evaluation will be based on the following features:

- Well-focused main points
- Clear organization
- Specific development of your ideas
- Control of sentence structure, punctuation, grammar, word choice, and spelling

REMEMBER, YOU MUST COMPLETE BOTH THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (PART I) AND THE ESSAY (PART II) TO RECEIVE A SCORE ON THE LANGUAGE ARTS, WRITING TEST. To avoid having to repeat both parts of the test, be sure to do the following:

- Do not leave the pages blank
- Write legibly in ink so that the evaluators will be able to read your writing
- Write on the assigned topic. If you write on a topic other than the one assigned, you will not receive a score for the Language Arts, Writing Test.
- Write your essay on the lined pages of the separate answer sheet booklet. Only the writing on these pages will be scored.

IMPORTANT:
You may return to the multiple-choice section after you complete your essay if you have time remaining in this test period. Do not return the Language Arts, Writing booklet until you finish both Parts I and II of the Language Arts, Writing Test.

Topic A

Suppose you had the opportunity to teach something you know to someone else.

In your essay, identify what you would teach and explain how you would teach this. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

Part II is a test to determine how well you can use written language to explain your ideas.

In preparing your essay, you should take the following steps:

- *Read the DIRECTIONS and the TOPIC carefully.*
- *Plan your essay before you write. Use the scratch paper provided to make any notes. These notes will be collected but not scored.*
- *Before you turn in your essay, reread what you have written and make any changes that will improve your essay.*

Your essay should be long enough to develop the topic adequately.

[End of GED Essay Directions and Topic]

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

1. What do you already know about getting ideas to write essays?

2. What do you already know about organizing those ideas into an essay?

3. What are your thoughts about how you would plan to go about writing an essay on the GED test?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning and Assigning: *Decide whether you would like to work alone, with a partner, or in a group to explore the following topics, and who will do which parts:*

- *What do you think the directions are telling you to do?*
- *What are the different ways to think of subjects that will develop the assigned topic?*
- *What are different ways to get ideas for the subject?*

Doing the Work:
Preparing for the Essay: *The GED directions list the three steps you should follow in preparing to write your essay. Look at these again:*

- *"Read the **DIRECTIONS** and the **TOPIC** carefully."*

- *"Plan your essay before you write. Use the scratch paper provided to make any notes. These notes will be collected but not scored."*
- *"Before you turn in your essay, reread what you have written and make any changes that will improve your essay."*
- *Discuss and come to an understanding of what the group thinks that those instructions mean.*
- *What are some ways to do each of these steps?*
- *Ask your instructor for resources where other people share ideas on how to develop a topic into an essay.*

Generating Essay Subjects: *A first step in writing an essay for the GED is to come up with subjects that develop the assigned GED topic. As a group, discuss:*

- *What do you already know about getting subjects to write about?*
- *What do you already know about brainstorming, mindmapping, list making, and free writing?*
- *Ask your instructor for resource material that explains and gives examples of various methods to come up with subjects for GED essay topics. List any information that is new to the group.*
- *How might you use brainstorming to generate ideas?*
- *What does mindmapping mean to you? How might you use this technique?*
- *Look at the questions listed here. What words start questions? Where and how might you use questions to generate ideas?*

Depending on how the pairs or groups work through this part of the Activity, you may wish to assist in their discussions or understanding about mindmapping or brainstorming. Visual learners in particular will find mind-mapping helpful. This technique was developed by Tony Buzan of the Learning Methods Group in England; his book *Use Both Sides of Your Brain*, New York, E.P. Dutton, Inc., 1983, or Joyce Wycoff's *Mind Mapping*, Berkley Publishing Group, 1991, are great resources.

Probably as many ways exist to run a brainstorming session as there are groups to try to come up with ideas. Universal brainstorming rules include: all ideas should be listed, no ideas should be eliminated, no ideas are too silly, because silly ideas lead to a more creative approach or loosen up the thinking for more workable thoughts and building on, or piggybacking, already listed ideas.

Brainstorming and putting the details or ideas on Post-It notes instead of writing them on a list is a particularly helpful technique for organizing thoughts, because the notes can be moved and rearranged without a lot of effort or making a confusing maze.

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

If you worked alone or in pairs when you were Doing the Work, then do the Small Group work below. If you already worked in a small group, skip directly to the Whole Class part of the activity.

Small Groups: *In your small group, report on your answers to each of the four issues explored in Doing the Work. Discuss the strategies that the group members have decided to use, giving the reason for the choices made.*

Whole Class: *Report to the class your answers to each of the four issues explored in Doing the Work. Discuss the strategies that the group members have decided to use, giving the reasons for the choices made.*

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How good are you at developing strategies for writing essays? Explain.

Did your review of the methods to generate essay subjects give you new information about the GED essay?

Write down some thoughts on how you will plan the essay, use scratch notes, reread, and improve the essay.

Develop a statement of what you feel is important to know about preparing to write an essay for the GED.

Which of the idea-generating techniques you and your group have explored in this Activity do you think you will like to use?

Are you strong in writing, or is writing something that you don't feel confident in doing?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information presented in the Practice Test question to other information or situations.

Give some examples where you had to develop a method to solve a problem at home.

How can you use what you have learned in this Inquiry Activity in writing an essay on a GED topic?

Based on the directions for the GED essay, explain in greater detail the strategies you will use to prepare for the essay portion of the GED Writing test.

Based on the directions for the GED essay, explain in greater detail the strategies you will use to take the essay portion of the GED Writing test.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

How important is following the essay evaluation standards to passing the GED test?

How were mindmapping, brainstorming, list making, and free writing helpful to you?

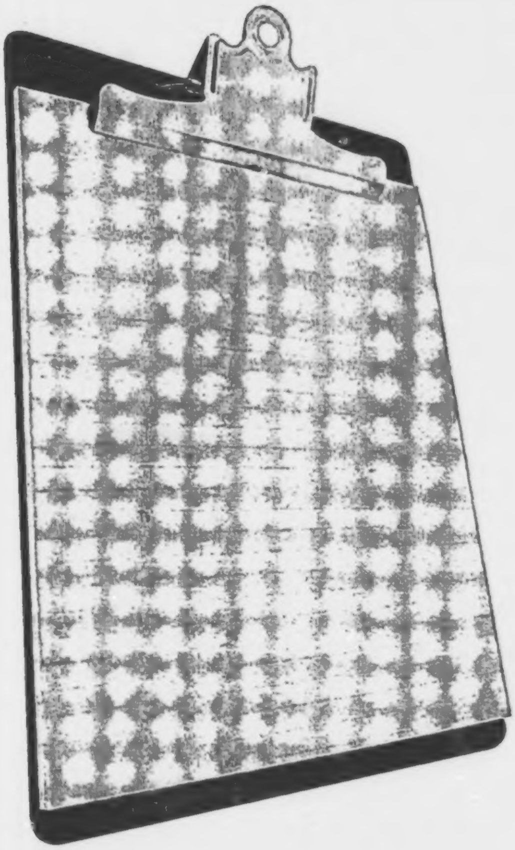
Which part of the Inquiry Activity was most helpful? Explain.

Which part of the Inquiry Activity was least helpful? Explain.

Introduction to Writing

Learning Project ❶

Writing the Rough Draft



This Learning Project focuses on beginning the writing process. To begin writing, the writer must know what the topic on which he or she is writing will be, and, equally importantly, must have something to say about that topic. Writing is also more readily accomplished when it is separated from the editing process. To this end, writers are encouraged to develop and organize ideas rather than worry about correct usage at this point in the process.

GED Test writing topics are very broad and inherently personal. That is, the test-taker can think about experiences he or she has had, skills he or she possesses, or ideas on broad themes that everyone has considered. It is important that the test-taker read the subject, or prompt, carefully. While a wide range of possible development for a subject is allowed, the essay must be on the topic given in the test book, and not some other, misread subject.

Pre-writing strategies focus on generating details for the essay. In GED Writing and You, we provide a number of idea generating strategies: mindmapping, list making, brainstorming, and free writing. Your writers can choose among them for the strategy that works the most effectively for them.

Once writers have gathered their details, they must begin arranging them in a logical, easily understood manner. Organization is the area where most beginning writers struggle. Ideas must flow in a logical manner, so that the reader will understand the writer's point. It is important to know that the GED Test Readers look for organization, focus, and development in the essays they read. They know, because of the time constraints placed upon the test-takers, that 45 minutes is enough time to write a barely-polished rough draft.

In Inquiry Activity 1-4, learners will actually write their rough drafts. By this time, working through the pre-writing strategies carefully, your learners will begin to understand how the writing process works.

The entire Learning Project can be repeated several times, each time using a different topic for the students to write on. The pre-writing activities will allow your learners the time and awareness to begin to develop a writing fluency.

Learning Project ❶ Writing the Rough Draft

Inquiry Activity 1-1: Getting a Subject to Write About

1. **Identifying the Problem**

You will be asked in this Inquiry Activity to start the writing process by listing possible ideas for this topic. The Essay Topic follows. Just read the topic; don't worry about writing anything just yet.

Topic A

Suppose you had the opportunity to teach something you know to someone else.

In your essay, identify what you would teach and explain how you would teach this. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

What words do you think are important in Topic A?

Are any words in Topic A unfamiliar to you? From listening to others, do you have an idea of what the words might mean?

2. **Becoming Familiar with the Problem**

Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were particularly helpful, so you can remember to use them other times when you begin a writing assignment.

All writers know that the hardest thing is selecting a topic and assessing how to develop it. Slowing down the writing process will allow your students the time they need to understand the writing process.

Reread Topic A. What is Topic A asking you to write about?

Do you understand the topic?

Is the topic clear to you?

Underline words in Topic A that tell you what you are to do.

Who is going to read this and why is that important?

While it is not necessary for your students to concentrate on the readers, it is still helpful to know that two people will be reading their essays. One important thing in writing is to focus on what the reader knows and what the reader needs to know.

What do you know about getting ideas to write about?

This is context for the various idea-generating techniques presented in the GED Writing and You Inquiry Activity. Some of the learners may need some assistance in working with these.

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning:

Meet with a partner and discuss:

- *What words you think are important and clarify any unfamiliar words in the Topic;*
- *What the Topic is asking you to write about;*
- *Who is going to read your essay and why that is important;*
- *What you know about getting a subject to write about.*

Doing the Work:

Step 1: List Possible Ideas for an Essay Topic. *Individually, list as many ideas for teaching something to someone else as you can. Using the techniques you explored in GED Writing and You, Generating Ideas (Inquiry Activity 4), write down every idea that comes to mind.*

- *Use the questions that follow as a guide to help you develop your list, if you need them:*
- *What are the things you like to do that you might want to share with someone else?*
- *Do people tell you that you do something well? What are those things you do well? Make a list of them. How might you share your expertise with others?*
- *Think about your hobbies, your skills at work or at home. Add all of them to your list.*
- *Just write down as many ideas as you can – the more ideas you have, the better.*

Step 2: Narrow Down. *Now go back through your list, and think about which items you feel that you know the most about and which you would feel most comfortable writing about. Put a star or underline the ideas that you might want to use as the subject of your essay.*

Step 3: Pick a Subject. *To pick one item from your list as the subject of your essay, think about the following questions:*

- *Which idea do you know the most about?*
- *For which idea can you provide the most examples of how you might teach this to someone else?*

Make a list of the reasons that you picked the subject that you did.

Be prepared to share your idea and the steps you went through to choose your topic.

4. Sharing with Others

Meet with your partner and share your lists.

Which of your subject ideas are similar to your partner's?

Did talking with your partner give you some new ideas?

Tell how you narrowed the list down, and why you picked the potential subjects you did.

How did your partner decide on a topic? What was similar in the way your partner made the choice? What was different?

As a whole class, discuss the subject you have chosen and the way you went about choosing it.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting:* *Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How did you feel about this way of developing ideas and making a list?

What was good about the list-making process?

What has surprised you about this process or about yourself?

How will list making help you in writing?

Extending:* *Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Where else in your life do you make lists? Is that similar or different from this process? Why?

How might you use list making in your writing at home and/or at work?

How might you use this list making and narrowing-down process in the future?

What happens in your thinking when you try to get many ideas rather than concentrating on just one?

Evaluating:* *Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?

Inquiry Activity 1-2: Listing and Grouping Relevant Details

1. Identifying the Problem

You will be asked in this Inquiry Activity to do the second step of the writing process by listing as many details for the subject you have chosen to write about. The Essay Topic follows. Just read the topic; don't worry about writing anything just yet.

Topic A

Suppose you had the opportunity to teach something you know to someone else.

In your essay, identify what you would teach and explain how you would teach this.
Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

The pre-writing activities being presented in the Inquiry Activities making up this Learning Project can provide enough structure and activity to get your students started on writing. For most writers, particularly beginning writers, getting started is the hardest part.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were particularly helpful, so you can remember to use them other times when you begin a writing assignment.

1. *Reread the subject you have decided to teach someone else in an essay, the subject you chose in Inquiry Activity 1-1.*
2. *Are you still comfortable with the subject you have chosen?*
3. *Besides the GED essay evaluators, who else might be interested in reading your essay on the subject you have chosen?*
4. *What do you know about how to generate details to support your subject?*
5. *Which of the idea-generating techniques you have learned about in GED Writing and You Inquiry Activity 4 – brainstorming, mindmapping, list making, or free writing – do you think will work most easily to get details to support your subject?*

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning:
Meet with a partner and discuss what you know about generating details to support an essay subject.

Have you watched others do what it is you are going to teach others? How might that help you generate ideas?

Sometimes looking at things from a different angle will open up the process for students who have a lot of trouble putting ideas on paper.

Discuss with your partner and decide which technique for coming up with many ideas you will use to get details to support your topic.

Doing the Work:

Step 1: List Details. *Individually, using the technique you decided to use above, list as many details as you can that might support the subject you have chosen: teaching something you know to someone else. Write down every detail that comes to mind. At this point don't stop to focus on one or two details. Also don't eliminate any details. The purpose here is to get as many details as possible.*

Use the questions that follow as a guide if you need them:

You may want to add questions that your class will respond to, or eliminate some that you think will not work.

- *Based on your experience with the subject you have chosen, what are the first things you do when you begin this skill or task you are teaching? List as many of those things as you can.*
- *What experiences have you had with this subject you are teaching? Have you had a funny experience? Or a sad experience? An experience with family or friends? Write that experience down with as much detail as you can about the entire experience.*
- *If someone were teaching you the subject, what details would you want to know about the subject from that person?*
- *Just write down as many details as you can. The more details you have, the better.*

Step 2: Determine all Relevant Details. *Look at all the details and determine which ones are important to an understanding of the subject your essay is about - details that make the subject clear and understandable. Place an "R," for relevant, beside all these details. The details without the "R" are called irrelevant details, those that might be nice to know but do not support the subject.*

Sometimes the interesting but not supporting details will lengthen the essay, a situation that your students may be looking for. But irrelevancy often leads an unsure writer away from the topic. Being able to clear the distracters away before the actual writing can help the writer stay on topic.

Step 3: Group the Relevant Details. *Now go back through your list of relevant details and group similar relevant details together. Make a list of the reasons that you used to pick the relevant details that you did. Be prepared to share your idea and the steps you went through to choose it.*

4. Sharing with Others

Meet with your partner and discuss:

- *The complete list of details you wrote down in step 1;*
- *The details you determined were relevant and those that you thought were not relevant;*
- *Your grouping of the relevant details.*

How did talking with your partner give you some new ideas about more details that could be added, more relevant or irrelevant details, a new suggestion for grouping the relevant details together? Explain.

As a whole class, discuss the grouping of the relevant details you have chosen, and the way you went about choosing it.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What have you learned about this list making process as it relates to the second step in writing a rough draft -- listing and grouping relevant details?

What has surprised you about this process or about yourself?

If you were to tell someone else what relevant means, what would you tell that person? Why does relevance matter when you are writing?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.
In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

How does thinking of many ideas feel like a brainstorm?

Where do you think the word brainstorm comes from? How could you find out?

Where else would idea-generating techniques like mindmapping, brainstorming, or using Post-It™ notes be useful in your life at home and/or at work?

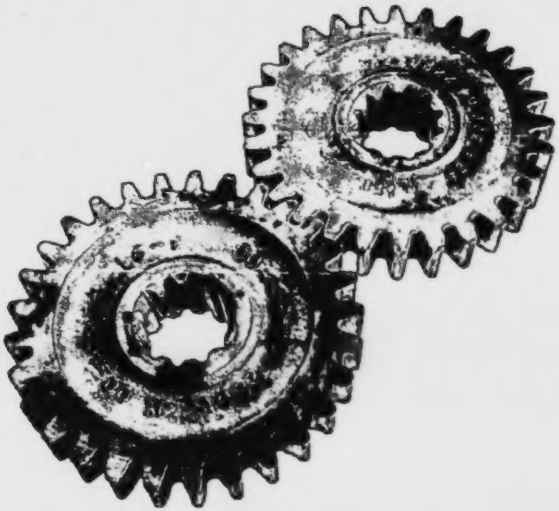
Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?



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Learning Project ❶ Writing the Rough Draft

Inquiry Activity 1-3: Organizing the Essay

1. Identifying the Problem

You will be asked in this Inquiry Activity to do the third step of the writing process by listing as many details for the subject you have chosen to write about. The Essay Topic follows. Just read the topic; don't worry about writing anything just yet.

Topic A

Suppose you had the opportunity to teach something you know to someone else.

**In your essay, identify what you would teach and explain how you would teach this.
Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.**

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were particularly helpful, so you can remember to use them other times when you begin a writing assignment.

1. *Reread the subject you have decided to teach someone else in an essay – the subject you chose in Inquiry Activity 1-1.*
2. *Review the details that you decided to use to support your essay subject. Are you comfortable with the details you have chosen to support your essay subject?*
3. *Review the details again to be sure that all of the details are relevant to your subject.*
4. *Review the grouping you made of the details and adjust anything as you see fit.*
5. *Based on the topic of the essay and your essay subject, what kind of organizing technique might you use for your essay?*

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning:
Meet with a partner and list all the ways you might organize the essay. Check your lists. Did you consider ordering from:
- *Most important to least important? Why?*
- *First step to last step? Why?*
- *Most interesting to least interesting? Why?*
- *Time order: first time, second time, next time? Why?*

Discuss how you are going to organize your details. How might Post-It™ notes help you organize your details?

Some topics lend themselves readily to one organizing principle better than others. Teaching someone to do something would seem to be readily organized in step-by-step order. However, some writers may have a very good logical reason for most important to least important.

Doing the Work:

Step 1: Choose Your Organizing Technique. *Decide on the organizing technique you will be using.*

Step 2: Organize the Details. *Individually, using the organizing technique you decided to use, place your details and groups of details into the sequence. (Use Post-It™ notes or mindmapping, so you can experiment by changing the sequence around.)*

The idea of a clear or logical flow of ideas can be brought up here. Sometimes an idea may be hard to follow, because the details are not in the best order.

Use the questions that follow as a guide if you need them:

- *Based on your experience with the subject you have chosen, what is the sequence that will make clear what you will teach?*
- *If someone were teaching you the subject, in what sequence would you like to have the subject presented?*
- *Are there any alternative organizing sequences that might make the subject easier to follow?*
- *After the details have been organized, review again the details to make sure that you still consider them relevant to the subject of your essay.*

Be prepared to share your details and the steps you went through to choose it.

4. Sharing with Others

Meet with your partner and discuss:

- *The organizing technique you finally decided to use;*
- *The way you organized your details using that technique;*
- *Any alternative ways to organize the details that you considered;*
- *Whether your review of the details once they were organized indicated any irrelevant details or the need for more details.*

Did talking with your partner give you some new ideas about how to organize the details that could be added, more relevant or irrelevant details, a new suggestion for grouping the relevant details together? Explain.

As a whole class, discuss the grouping of the relevant details you have chosen, and the way you went about choosing it.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

Have you ever read an unorganized book or paper? Describe what it was like to try to read it.

What have you learned about organizing techniques when writing a rough draft of an essay?

What organizing techniques have you used before? Where? What did you call them?

What has surprised you about this process or about yourself?

Why is organizing writing important to the reader? What does that mean to you as a writer?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

What does organizing a room have in common with organizing writing?

How might you use the organizing techniques you explored in this Inquiry Activity to organize ideas in your writing at home and/or at work?

Think again about the unorganized writing you have tried to read and understand before. Why was it unorganized? What would you recommend the author do to improve his/her organization?

How would you teach a young person to organize his/her writing?

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?

Learning Project ❶ Writing the Rough Draft

Inquiry Activity 1-4: Writing the Rough Draft of the Essay

1. Identifying the Problem

You will be asked in this Inquiry Activity to do the fourth step of the writing process: listing as many details as possible for the subject you have chosen to write about. The Essay Topic follows. Just read the topic; don't worry about writing anything just yet.

Topic A

Suppose you had the opportunity to teach something you know to someone else.

In your essay, identify what you would teach and explain how you would teach this. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so you can remember them the next time you begin to write.

One of the real advantages of all the pre-writing activities is that by the time a person has come up with the topic, gathered details, organized details, and reviewed the whole process, the actual writing comes a little easier.

1. *Reread the subject you have decided to teach someone else in an essay, the subject you chose in Inquiry Activity 1-1.*
2. *Review the organization of the details that you decided to use to support your essay subject.*
3. *Are you comfortable with the way you have organized the details you have chosen to support your essay subject?*
4. *Review the details again to be sure that all the details are relevant to your subject and that there are enough details to support your subject.*
5. *This Inquiry Activity asks you to write the rough draft of your essay. What do you know about writing a rough draft of an essay?*
6. *Do you think you have to worry about grammar, verbs, spelling, and punctuation to write a rough draft?*
7. *What do you know about how to organize an entire essay?*

As you assess the progress of your students, you may decide that this is a good time to remind them about paragraphing.

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning:

Meet with a partner and discuss how you are thinking about organizing your essay. Look at the order in which you placed your details.

Will this make an interesting essay? What else is needed to make it interesting? Add that now.

Will the essay be clear? What else can you add to make it more clear? Add it now.

Will the ideas and details flow in smoothly from one to the next? How can you improve the flow of ideas?

Do you have an interesting beginning that will make the reader want to continue reading? How can it be made more interesting?

Do you have a clear ending that tells the readers what you wanted them to learn?

Doing the Work:

Individually, using the organization you have decided upon, write your rough draft. Think about getting your ideas and details in the order you have chosen. Be sure the ideas follow one another in a way that is clear to your reader. You will spend more time on sentence structure, punctuation, spelling and grammar when you revise your essay.

Most writers emphasize that the writing process works best when the editor, that function that looks at sentence structure, and worries about punctuation and spelling, is not involved in the rough draft. It is not that we think the mechanics of correct writing are unimportant, but rather that the time to focus on mechanics is after the first version is on paper and its author can assess, correct, and improve it. Writing is creating and editing is correcting. The two functions can often be in conflict, and this will make any writing almost impossible to accomplish.

Use the questions that follow as a guide if you need them:
If someone were writing to you about this subject, how would you like to have the subject presented?
Are there any other ways that might make the subject easier to follow?

Be prepared to share the steps you went through to choose how you have organized your essay.

4. Sharing with Others

Meet with your partner, and discuss:
- *The way you put your essay together;*
- *Any alternative ways to organize the rough draft that you considered;*
- *The rough draft of the essay you wrote.*

Did talking with your partner give you some new ideas about how to organize the essay? Explain.

As a whole class, discuss the essay, the organization of the essay you have chosen, and the way you went about choosing it.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What have you learned about various ways to organize an essay?

What have you learned about writing a rough draft of an essay?

What has surprised you about this process or about yourself? Explain.

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

How might you use the ideas you explored in this Inquiry Activity in your writing at home and/or at work?

Your instructor will give you another GED-type writing topic. Following all the steps outlined in Inquiry Activities 1-1 through 1-4, write a rough draft of an essay.

This entire Learning Project can be repeated several times, each time using a different topic for the students to write on. The pre-writing activities will allow the learners the time and awareness to begin to develop a writing fluency.

Discuss the process you used to write this rough draft and the rough draft itself with a partner or group.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?

Introduction to Writing

Learning Project ❷

Evaluating the Evaluation Standards and Your Essay

Learning Project 2 addresses the Four-Point Scoring Guide used to evaluate the essays written for the GED Language Arts Writing Test part 2. The GED 2002 Essay is different from its predecessors, in that it no longer requires a formulaic essay. But just as writers must always consider their audience when they write any piece, so must the test-takers be aware of what their audience of two will be looking for as they evaluate.

The Four-Point Scoring Guide is given in the Appendix, and also appears in the Inquiry Activities in this Learning Project. Essays are scored on having well-developed main points, clear organization, development of the ideas brought forth in the essay, and control of sentence structure, punctuation, word choice and spelling. The levels considered by the readers range from inadequate to effective. It sometimes surprises instructors and their learners alike to recognize that mechanics and usage are the fourth consideration. There is no fixed number of errors allowed. In this guide, grammar takes its functional role of making sure that the meaning of the writer is clear.

In this Learning Project, we begin the process of evaluating written work. Beginning with practice essays, provided in the Appendix, instructors can take their learners through this process of evaluating. Is it clear? Do I understand? Should this sentence be moved? Should this paragraph be broken?

After evaluating practice essays, learners will work with partners and evaluate each other's work. Peer evaluation is how writers understand the effects of their work on the reader. It is easy for writers to understand their writing; it came from their own thinking processes. If someone else understands what they have written, then they know that their ideas are clearly stated.

Learning Project ② Evaluating the Evaluation Standards and Your Essay

Inquiry Activity 2-1: Understanding the Essay Scoring Guide

1. Identifying the Problem

Scan the directions and Evaluation Standards that follow. DO NOT READ these directions; just scan them for now. You will be asked to read this passage in more detail later and answer questions about it.

From the Essay Directions and Topic

Two evaluators will score your essay according to its overall effectiveness. Their evaluation will be based on the following features:

- Well-focused main points
- Clear organization
- Specific development of your ideas
- Control of sentence structure, punctuation, grammar, word choice, and spelling.

Essay Scoring

There is a four-point scoring guide that the essay evaluators use:

1: Inadequate, 2: Marginal, 3: Adequate, and 4: Effective.

A candidate (for the GED) cannot pass with an average score of less than 2 (average, because 2 evaluators will score the essay and if one evaluator gives a score of 1 and the other a score of 2, then the essay cannot pass).

The definitions of the four-point scoring guide are as follows:

The Four-Point Scoring Guide for Essay Evaluation

The definitions of the four-point scoring guide as it applies to Well-Focused Main Points (or Response to the Prompt) are:

	1 Inadequate	2 Marginal	3 Adequate	4 Effective
	Reader has difficulty identifying or following writer's ideas.	Reader occasionally has difficulty understanding or following the writer's ideas.	Reader understands writer's ideas.	Reader understands and easily follows the writer's expression of ideas.
Response to the Prompt	Attempts to address prompt but with little or no success in establishing a focus.	Addresses the prompt, though the focus may shift.	Uses the writing prompt to establish a main idea.	Presents a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt.
Clear Organization	Fails to organize ideas.	Shows some evidence of an organizational plan.	Uses identifiable organizational plan.	Establishes a clear and logical organization.
Development and Details	Demonstrates little or no development; usually lacks details or examples or presents irrelevant information.	Has some development but lacks specific details; may be limited to a listing, repetitions, or generalizations.	Has focused but occasionally uneven development; incorporates some specific detail.	Achieves coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples.
Conventions of Edited American English	May exhibit minimal or no control of sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	May demonstrate inconsistent control of sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	Generally controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	Consistently controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.
Word Choice	Exhibits weak and/or inappropriate words.	Exhibits a narrow range of word choice, often including inappropriate selections.	Exhibits appropriate word choice.	Exhibits varied and precise word choice.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

1. Carefully read all the information in step 1, Identifying the Problem.

2. What is the scoring guide telling you about writing?

3. How important is the essay in your overall Language Arts, Writing Score?

4. Mark words in the directions of the scoring guide that you do not understand.

5. Since this guide is written in technical terms, many of the words used may be unfamiliar.

6. What information did you already know about the essay?

7. What information is new to you?

8. What information will you use to help write your essay?

9. The word focus or focused is used in the explanations of Response to Prompt in the Four-Point Scoring Guide.

10. What do you think focused means when writing a GED essay?

11. Where have you heard the phrase main idea before?

12. What does the phrase main idea mean to you?

13. What does the word organization mean as it is used in the second evaluation standard?

14. What does development mean as it is used in the third evaluation standard?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Your instructor will divide the class into 3 groups and assign each group one of the first three criteria that make up the scoring guide – Response to Prompt, Clear Organization, or Development of Details.

Each group should research what those standards mean and how the standards change between Inadequate and Effective. Try to get some written essay examples from the textbooks, other reference material available in your classroom, or your folders that show each level.

Prepare a presentation to the rest of your class on the research you have done so that they will understand.

Planning:
In the group, plan how you will do this task.

Assigning:
Assign the various subtasks to accomplish the presentation to various group members.

Doing the Work:
The group should do the assigned subtasks and prepare a presentation to the rest of your class on the research you have done, so that they will understand all about the standard that your group was assigned.

Write down notes of your thinking as you do this. Keep these notes for further reference.

4. Sharing with Others

Each group will present its research to the rest of the class and lead a class discussion based on the group's presentation. Be prepared to answer questions class members may have.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

***Reflecting:* Think about how well you understood what you have done.**

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How does knowing the information about how the essay is scored help you to plan for and write the essay?

How does knowing the four-point criteria used to judge the essay help you to plan for and write the essay?

***Extending:* Extend what you learned to new situations.**

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Your instructor will show the class some essays. The class will evaluate them based on the first three evaluation standards explored in this Inquiry Activity. The decision as to whether it is an Inadequate, Marginal, Adequate, or Effective essay must be supported by reference to the standards expressed in the scoring guide.

Several versions of Topic F, ranging from 1 to 4 in score, and several essays addressing Topic C, also ranging from a score of 1 to 4, appear in Appendix B, if you wish to use them.

***Evaluating:* Assess what you learned and how you learned it.**

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What kind of essay writing strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?

Learning Project ❷ Evaluating the Evaluation Standards and Your Essay

Inquiry Activity 2-2: Evaluating The Essay

1. Identifying the Problem

Scan the directions and Evaluation Standards that follow.

From the Essay Directions and Topic

Two evaluators will score your essay according to its overall effectiveness. Their evaluation will be based on the following features:

- Well-focused main points
- Clear organization
- Specific development of your ideas
- Control of sentence structure, punctuation, grammar, word choice, and spelling.

Essay Scoring

There is a four-point scoring guide that the essay evaluators use:

1: Inadequate, 2: Marginal, 3: Adequate, and 4: Effective.

A candidate (for the GED) cannot pass with an average score of less than 2 (average, because 2 evaluators will score the essay and if one evaluator gives a score of 1 and the other a score of 2, then the essay cannot pass).

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The definitions of the four-point scoring guide are as follows:

The Four-Point Scoring Guide for Essay Evaluation

The definitions of the four-point scoring guide as it applies to Well-Focused Main Points (or Response to the Prompt) are:

	1 Inadequate	2 Marginal	3 Adequate	4 Effective
	Reader has difficulty identifying or following writer's ideas.	Reader occasionally has difficulty understanding or following the writer's ideas.	Reader understands writer's ideas.	Reader understands and easily follows the writer's expression of ideas.
Response to the Prompt	Attempts to address prompt but with little or no success in establishing a focus.	Addresses the prompt, though the focus may shift.	Uses the writing prompt to establish a main idea.	Presents a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt.
Clear Organization	Fails to organize ideas.	Shows some evidence of an organizational plan.	Uses identifiable organizational plan.	Establishes a clear and logical organization.
Development and Details	Demonstrates little or no development; usually lacks details or examples or presents irrelevant information.	Has some development but lacks specific details; may be limited to a listing, repetitions, or generalizations.	Has focused but occasionally uneven development; incorporates some specific detail.	Achieves coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples.
Conventions of Edited American English	May exhibit minimal or no control of sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	May demonstrate inconsistent control of sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	Generally controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	Consistently controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.
Word Choice	Exhibits weak and/or inappropriate words.	Exhibits a narrow range of word choice, often including inappropriate selections.	Exhibits appropriate word choice.	Exhibits varied and precise word choice.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

1. Read again the information in Step 1, Identifying the Problem.

2. How has the exploration you did in Inquiry Activity 2-1 helped you to understand the Scoring Guide? Explain.

3. Do you still have any unanswered questions about the Scoring Guide? What are they?

4. Are you clear on the meaning of the words focus, main idea, organization, and development?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Doing the Work:

If you wish, select from the essays on Topic C and Topic F, included in your Guide.
For this Inquiry Activity, you may find that an essay that is graded as a 2 or a 3 will work the best. Students will be readily able to make corrections, additions, and constructive comments.

Your instructor will make available to the class, either through copies or on the overhead, an essay written on another GED test topic. Read through the essay carefully, and working in your small group or with a partner, decide how you would grade the essay according to the evaluation standards of the GED. As you do this, list your comments on how this essay measures up to each of the first three GED evaluation standards: Response to Prompt, Clear Organization, Development and Details. Be as specific as possible in your comments.

4. Sharing with Others

Now your instructor will place the essay on a transparency and ask the whole class to judge it according to the GED evaluation standards. The class should discuss this essay and support their conclusions with specific references to both the evaluation standards and the essay.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What information did you get from the evaluation of this essay?

How does evaluating essays help you to plan for and write your own essay?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Using the steps for writing an essay outlined in Learning Project #1 and the information you gained from the evaluation process in the Inquiry Activities in this Learning Project, revise the essay presented in this activity making the improvements or changes you and the class discussed.

Evaluate the essay and if you want, have your partner or group evaluate it also.

It is often easier to revise the work of others, because there is no sense of "I know what I mean," nor any auto-correction.

Was the essay easy to revise? Explain.

In what ways do you think it is now a better essay? Explain.

What did you do to correct some of the issues that were present in the original essay? Why did you choose the things you did?

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

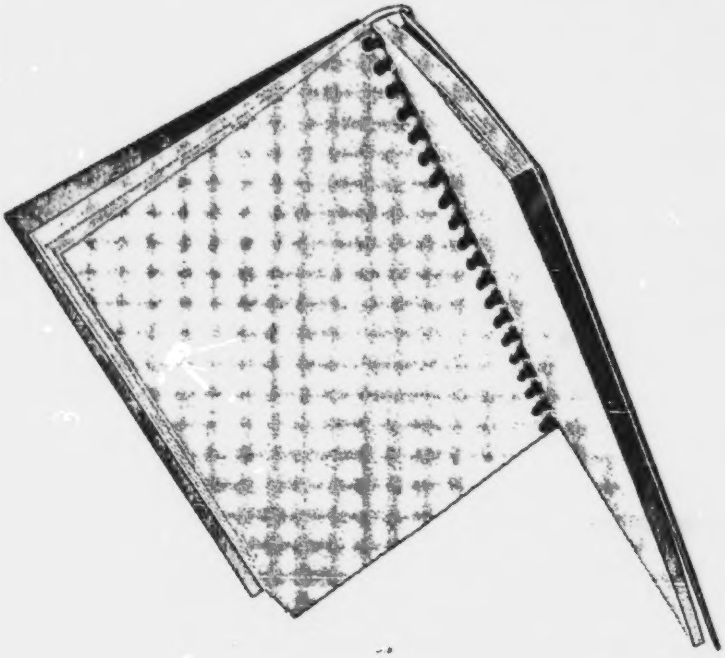
In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain

What new essay writing strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?



Learning Project ❷ Evaluating the Evaluation Standards and Your Essay

Inquiry Activity 2-3: Evaluating Your Essay

1. Identifying the Problem

Scan the directions and Evaluation Standards that follow.

From the Essay Directions and Topic

Two evaluators will score your essay according to its overall effectiveness. Their evaluation will be based on the following features:

- Well-focused main points
- Clear organization
- Specific development of your ideas
- Control of sentence structure, punctuation, grammar, word choice, and spelling.

Essay Scoring

There is a four-point scoring guide that the essay evaluators use:

1: Inadequate, 2: Marginal, 3: Adequate, and 4: Effective.

A candidate (for the GED) cannot pass with an average score of less than 2 (average, because 2 evaluators will score the essay and if one evaluator gives a score of 1 and the other a score of 2, then the essay cannot pass).

The definitions of the four-point scoring guide are as follows:

The Four-Point Scoring Guide for Essay Evaluation

The definitions of the four-point scoring guide as it applies to Well-Focused Main Points (or Response to the Prompt) are:

	1 Inadequate	2 Marginal	3 Adequate	4 Effective
	Reader has difficulty identifying or following writer's ideas.	Reader occasionally has difficulty understanding or following the writer's ideas.	Reader understands writer's ideas.	Reader understands and easily follows the writer's expression of ideas.
Response to the Prompt	Attempts to address prompt but with little or no success in establishing a focus.	Addresses the prompt, though the focus may shift.	Uses the writing prompt to establish a main idea.	Presents a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt.
Clear Organization	Fails to organize ideas.	Shows some evidence of an organizational plan.	Uses identifiable organizational plan.	Establishes a clear and logical organization.
Development and Details	Demonstrates little or no development; usually lacks details or examples or presents irrelevant information.	Has some development but lacks specific details; may be limited to a listing, repetitions, or generalizations.	Has focused but occasionally uneven development; incorporates some specific detail.	Achieves coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples.
Conventions of Edited American English	May exhibit minimal or no control of sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	May demonstrate inconsistent control of sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	Generally controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	Consistently controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.
Word Choice	Exhibits weak and/or inappropriate words.	Exhibits a narrow range of word choice, often including inappropriate selections.	Exhibits appropriate word choice.	Exhibits varied and precise word choice.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

1. Read again the information in step 1, Identifying the Problem.

2. Has the exploration you did in Inquiry Activity 2-2 helped you understand the Scoring Guide better?

3. Do you still have any unanswered questions about the Scoring Guide?

By now, students ought to be comfortable with the guide. If you have not already talked about the role of the reader, as shown across the top of the evaluation guide, you may want to have the students talk about why the reader is important.

4. What, if anything, in the evaluation standards is still unclear to you?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Doing the Work:

Individually, review your own essay written in Learning Project #1, according to the evaluation standards of the GED. As you do this, list your comments about how you think your essay measures up to each of the first three GED evaluation standards: Response to Prompt, Clear Organization, Development and Details. Be as specific as possible in your comments.

Determine if you will share your essay with the rest of the class for the next step and tell your instructor.

4. Sharing with Others

Now your instructor will place each volunteering class member's essay written in Learning Project #1 on a transparency and ask the whole class to judge each one according to the GED evaluation standards. The class should discuss each essay and support conclusions with specific references to both the evaluation standards and the essay. The individual whose essay is being discussed will share his or her own evaluation and the class will discuss.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What information did you get from your own evaluation of your essay?

A clear-eyed evaluation of one's own work is the best editing tool a writer can develop. As your students develop their writing skill, you may find opportunities to point out to them the ways in which they have developed this skill.

If the class also evaluated your essay, what additional information did you get from that evaluation?

How does evaluating essays help you to plan for and write the essay?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Using the steps for writing an essay outlined in Learning Project #1 and the information you gained from the evaluation process in both Inquiry Activities in this Learning Project, write another essay about something else you would teach.

Evaluate the essay and if you want, have the class evaluate it also.

Was the essay easier to write? Explain.

Do you think it was a better essay? Explain.

Did you correct some of the issues that were present in the previous essay? Explain.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

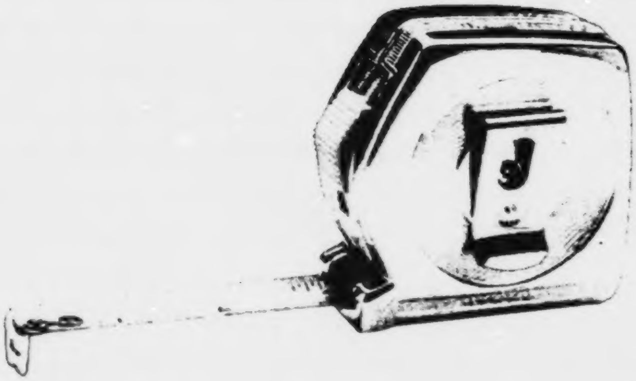
In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What new essay writing strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

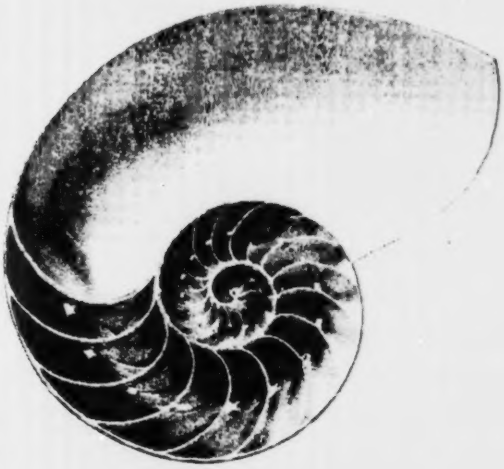
What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?



Introduction to Writing

Learning Project ❸

Revising for Clear Expression



Learning Project 3 introduces the revising process. As we have done in presenting the content-appropriate processes in Reading and Math, we slow down and individuate the revising process. Beginning writers often consider that a quick review for punctuation and spelling is all they need to do. In fact, that is the last part of a far more complex process. The heart of writing is in the revising.

Just as keeping learners' writings in a folder or journal is instructive, so too is making an on-going list of revising tips or strategies. This can be a separate folder, or a section of the Writing Journal your learners keep. They will find it helpful as they progress to see what they have learned and how they have improved.

We begin to use the multiple-choice section of the Language Arts Writing Practice Test in this Learning Project. Learners begin by revising the written passages from PA, and then look at specific areas highlighted by the multiple-choice questions, which allows them to check their work. Revising for Clear Expression considers organization issues, particularly misplaced sentences and ineffective paragraphing. Inquiry Activity 3-2 covers some issues of parallel structure, since the functional purpose for parallel structure is for clear expression: like ideas are expressed in similar constructions.

Revising is a two-fold problem solving exercise. First, the writer must decide what is wrong or what should be improved. In the second part of the problem, the writer must rework the problem area, to fix, or revise the writing.

IA 3-3 has your learners exchanging essays with their partners. Peer review is essential in the development of writing skill. You may find it helpful to revisit Classroom Rules in Volume I to remind your learners that constructive criticism is helpful, not personal. In the Appendix, we show an excellent method developed by Peter Elbow for peer review that emphasizes clarity of ideas and positive feedback. We also encourage the working pairs to read the essay they are evaluating aloud. The ear can hear what the eye does not see.

Learning Project ❸ Revising for Clear Expression

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

In the remaining Learning Projects for Language Arts, Writing, the focus will be on revision. Just as the only way to learn to write is to write, and write frequently, the only way to improve writing skills is to revise a first or rough draft many times, looking for many possible problem areas. We strongly recommend that your students keep their writing in a folder. For the revision projects, they will use work they have been accumulating.

They will also start a Revising Journal in these Inquiry Activities, writing down strategies for revising their own work as they develop them.

In this Learning Project, we focus on clarity of expression. As in the previous Learning Project, we start with work done by others, then move to revising their partner's work, and finally, working on their own writing. In this case, the work of others is one of the writing passages in PA.

Inquiry Activity 3-1: Clear Expression

1. Identifying the Problem

In this IA we are going to look at what has been written and consider whether the ideas have been expressed clearly and logically, so that the readers will understand them easily. To begin, very generally look over the passage that follows. (Don't read word for word or try to look for mistakes.)

Trotter Institute of Electronics
"Training for the Future"

Mr. Carlos Montanez
286 Greencrest Street
Houston, TX 77001

Dear Mr. Montanez:

(A)

(1) What does it take to get a good job? (2) You probably have read newspaper articles about how job opportunities are declining today. (3) At the same time, however there are occupations in which opportunities are expanding. (4) The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics gave the following report. (5) The report states that in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by 21 percent. (6) As an electronics technician, you can expect to have your choice of many high-paying jobs with excellent working conditions. (7) That means that for every 10 electronics technicians now working, two more will be needed.

(B)

(8) One of the best aspects of an electronics education was that you don't ever have to leave home to get one. (9) The Trotter Institute of Electronics, offers a one-year correspondence course that leads straight to a Certificate of Electronics. (10) You could soon be on your way to a career in electronics. (11) A career filled with excitement and promise.

(C)

(12) You probably think that any course offered by the Trotter Institute would be expensive. (13) Because you get textbooks, assignments, and consultation for only $450.00, and this includes employment counseling after you graduate, this will surprise you. (14) You can see now that getting a better job is easier than you thought.

(D)

(15) To prepare for a better job with a great future, complete the enclosed registration form. (16) Within 10 days, you'll move toward an interesting and rewarding new career. (17) As mentioned above in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by dramatic proportions. (18) Don't wait to take advantage of this exciting career opportunity.

Yours truly,

Michael T. Langford

Michael T. Langford
Admissions Counselor

Here are some problem clarification questions or directions you may want to consider when Identifying the Problem in the Language Arts, Writing Test.

Scan the passage:

What type of written communication is the passage?

Why do you think this passage was written?

How is the passage organized?

Why are the paragraphs lettered and the sentences numbered?

Now look at paragraph A.

Read the whole paragraph.

Note what, if anything, may stand out in the way it is written.

This paragraph has two problems. One is a misplaced sentence and the other is a problem in sentence construction. The practice your students get in revising these without looking at the questions will begin to build their revising skills. The better they are at revising, the better they will do on the multiple-choice test.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the paragraph, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when you take the writing test.

1. *What do you know about revising essays?*
2. *What do you know about how ideas are organized so the reader can follow the writer's train of thought?*
3. *Note what sentences in paragraph A may seem out of place.*
4. *Which sentences seem to have ideas fully expressed?*
5. *Are there places where you have trouble following the line of thinking?*

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to revise this paragraph so that the ideas are more clearly expressed. Try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Planning: *Use your experience with writing paragraphs to make sense of this one. How will you use your experience to answer this question?*

Doing the Work: *Working in pairs or small groups, answer the following questions or do the following activities. You should read the paragraph individually:*

- *As you read, identify areas where you think ideas are not clearly expressed or could be better expressed.*
- *Rewrite or move the sentence or sentences to express the ideas more clearly.*
- *Compare what you did with what your partner did.*
- *Note any similarities or differences in the changes that each of you made.*

Look at question 12 in the Language Arts, Writing multiple-choice test in PA. How similar are the changes you and your partner made to the answer choices there?

12. Sentences 4 and 5: **The U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics gave the following report. The report states that in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by 21 percent.**

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of these sentences? If the original is the best way, choose option (1).

(1) Statistics gave the following report. The report states
(2) Statistics gave the following report, the report states
(3) Statistics reporting
(4) Statistics having reported in the
(5) Statistics reports

The correct answer to this question is (5). The report is interesting only in that it supports the ideas in the sales pitch.

Question 13 in PA also shows changes. How closely do your and your partner's work mirror the options there?

13. Sentence 7: *That means that for every 10 electronics technicians now working, two more will be needed.*

Which revision should be made to sentence 7?

(1) move sentence 7 to follow sentence 1
(2) move sentence 7 to follow sentence 2
(3) move sentence 7 to follow sentence 3
(4) move sentence 7 to follow sentence 5
(5) move sentence 7 to the end of paragraph B

Sentence 7 should follow sentence 5 for the clear expression of the ideas expressed.

With your partner, develop an approach that you both might use to revise a paragraph. Put your approach in your Revising Journal. (You will add to this Journal as you work through these Inquiry Activities and Learning Projects.)

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge of the revisions you made and the approach you have developed, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *In your small group, compare your answer to others in the group.*

Explain why you chose the answer and how you found it.

Compare the process each group member used to analyze the writing to make the ideas more clear.

Agree on a process you might use during a test to identify areas needing to be improved in the writing portion of the test.

Agree on the best way to express the ideas clearly.

Discuss what you have learned about expressing ideas clearly and logically.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*
The different ways the group members revised the paragraph;
The version your group considers best;
The reasons any other revisions are not as clear; and
The editing process your group decided could be used during a test.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How has the information you learned in Learning Project 2 helped you to revise?

How can moving misplaced thoughts and ideas make the writing clearer?

How might you use this sort of revision in your own work?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Take a look at sentence 13 from the same letter.

(13) Because you get textbooks, assignments, and consultation for only $450.00, and this includes employment counseling after you graduate, this will surprise you.

How would you rewrite this sentence to make the ideas clear to the reader?

Look at the answer choices question 17 offers. Which choice is similar to the revision you made?

(1) You're in for a surprise and because you get
(2) Surprise with your textbook
(3) Because you are getting many things that will surprise you
(4) As a result of the surprise and $450.00, you get
(5) You're in for a surprise! You get

Answer (5) is the correct one, the only version that clearly expresses all of the ideas that are brought up. Sometimes, one sentence just won't do.

How would you use the skills you are developing to express ideas clearly in your own writing and in your writing in the workplace?

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

How does coming up with an answer before looking at the answer choices help you in the test?

One of the problems many test-takers have with the writing multiple-choice test is that the possible answer choices and the range of choices they offer can confuse people. Generally, in this test, the test-taker is better off looking at the writing and coming up with an answer, then try to match it.

Evaluate what you have learned about expressing ideas clearly.

What have you learned about revising?

How can this help you write?

What kinds of writing strategies did you learn from this exercise?

Learning Project ❸ Revising for Clear Expression

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 3-2: Parallel Structure

1. Identifying the Problem

In this Activity, we are going to look at how similar ideas within a sentence are expressed and consider whether the ideas have been expressed clearly, so that the readers will understand them easily. To begin, very generally look over the passage found here. (Don't read word for word or try to look for mistakes.)

The function of parallel structure is for clarity: like ideas expressed in similar constructions. It is a clue to the reader, sometimes so subtle that readers do not recognize that they have been given some assistance. Both of the errors in parallel structure take the same form; the first idea is a phrase and the second is a clause. That means that the second may be more recognizable, but it could mislead your students into thinking that parallel structure has only the one form.

How to Take Photographs

(A)

(1) Almost everyone have had the desire to take a picture at one time or another. (2) Some even regard photographs as an art form, while others snap pictures to send to family members. (3) Knowing some of the basics of photography will help you take better pictures.

(B)

(4) One of the first decisions to make is whether to photograph in color or you can use black and white. (5) Black-and-white photographs, still high in popularity, creates a very artistic mood. (6) Color, on the other hand, may be more appropriate for pictures of the family reunion or autumn landscapes.

(C)

(7) Film speed is also important. (8) If you are photographing in bright sunlight, you should select a film with a low speed. (9) This choice will have ensured the best possible print. (10) In low-light situations or if you are photographing rapid movement, a high-speed film is more appropriate. (11) This is because the film requires less light so you can set the shutter speed at a much faster rate to capture the action.

(D)

(12) If your camera has adjustable aperture and shutter speed settings, learning to use them can greatly enhance the quality of you're photographs. (13) Aperture refers to how wide open the lens is, which in turn determines how much light is allowed in. (14) Shutter speed describes how quickly the lens opens and shuts, controlling the amount of light that reaches the film. (15) A knowledge of these and other aspects of photography will help you to create the kinds of photos you want. (16) It takes practice, of course. (17) Practice helps you produce beautiful, memorable, and meaningful pictures.

Here are some problem clarification questions or directions you may want to consider when Identifying the Problem in the Language Arts, Writing Test.

Scan the passage:

What type of written communication is the passage?

Why do you think this passage was written?

How is the passage organized?

Why are the paragraphs lettered and the sentences numbered?

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the paragraph, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when you take the writing test.

1. What do you know about how ideas are organized so the reader can follow the writer's train of thought?

2. Which sentences seem to have ideas fully expressed?

3. In which sentences did you find yourself rereading certain sections because you had trouble following the ideas?

All of us have to reread sections that have been poorly written. That is, in fact, one of the clearest signs of trouble when one is revising or editing work.

4. Are there places where you have trouble following the line of thinking?

5. Notice the ideas in sentence 4. Is the similar relationship clear to the reader?

Because the similar ideas are expressed in different forms, it is not easy to see.

6. What do you know about parallel structure?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to revise this paragraph so that the ideas are more clearly expressed. Try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Planning: *Use your experience with writing paragraphs to make sense of this one. How will you use your experience to answer this question?*

Doing the Work: *Working in pairs or small groups, answer the following questions or do the following activities. You should read the paragraph individually.*

- *As you read, identify areas where you think ideas are not clearly expressed or could be better expressed.*
- *Reread sentence 4 and identify where the ideas might not be clear.*
- *Make the changes you think will make the ideas more understandable.*

Removing "you can use" from the sentence makes it clear and nicely expressed (Choice (5) in question 20).

- *Give the reasons for the changes you made to the sentence.*

The alternative decisions, whether to use color or black and white, are presented as the objects of the preposition. The sentence structure is both simpler and clearer.

- *Compare what you did with what your partner did.*
- *Note any similarities or differences in the changes that each of you made.*
- *Find support for the changes you made in an English Handbook or text.*

Some discussions can become complicated, but in general, handbooks focus on correlative expressions (often introduced by "not only" – "but also"), verbal constructions in a series, and lists or bullet points.

- *With your partner, develop an approach that you both might use to revise for parallel structure. Put your approach in your Revising Journal. (You will add to this Journal as you work through these Inquiry Activities and Learning Projects.)*

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge of the revisions you made and the approach you have developed, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *In your small group, compare your answer to others in the group.*

Explain why you chose the answer and how you found it.

Compare the process each group member used to analyze the writing to make the ideas more clear. Agree on a process you might use during a test to identify areas needing to be improved in the writing portion of the test.

Agree on the best way to express the ideas clearly.

Discuss what you have learned about expressing ideas clearly and logically.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*

The different ways the group members revised the paragraph;
The version your group considers best;
The reasons any other revisions are not as clear; and
The editing process your group decided could be used during a test.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How can using the concept of parallel structure help you make your writing clearer?

How might you use this sort of revision in your own work?

Once students begin to see what parallel structure is and understand how to correct it, they are well on their way to being good writers.

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Take a look at sentence 10 in the "How To" passage.

10) In low-light situations or if you are photographing rapid movement, a high-speed film is more appropriate.

How would you rewrite this sentence to make the ideas clear to the reader?

How would you use the skills you are developing to express ideas clearly in your own writing and in your writing in the workplace?

You might also want to inject Question 7 from the Letter of Complaint.

> (Sentence 9) The delivery men arrived not only at an inconvenient time, but also delivered the wrong sofa.
>
> Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of this sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (1).
>
> (1) arrived not only
> (2) not only arriving
> (3) arrived
> (4) not only arrived
> (5) only arrived

The correct answer (4) creates the sentence that has the two verb phrases introduced by the not only . . . but also convention. The delivery men not only arrived . . . but also delivered . . . .

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

How does coming up with an answer before looking at the answer choices help you in the test?

Evaluate what you have learned about expressing ideas clearly.

What have you learned about expressing similar ideas in similar forms?

When readers read the similar ideas in similar forms, they inherently recognize that the writer is showing comparison or similarity.

How can that help you write?

What kinds of writing strategies did you learn from this exercise?

Learning Project ❸ Revising for Clear Expression

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 3-3: Revising an Essay

Refer to Appendix C for several strategies to help accomplish successful peer review of essays. Remind your learners that this is a constructive exercise where both the reviewer and the writer can begin to understand the writing process better.

1. Identifying the Problem

In this Activity, you will read the work of a classmate or your partner. You will be looking for areas where the ideas are not clearly expressed. For example, sentences may be out of order, details that expand ideas may be scattered rather than clearly organized, or ideas may not be clearly explained. Then, you will look at your own work and revise it for clear expression of ideas.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

How has the exploration you did in the previous IAs, 3-1 and 3-2 helped you understand the process of revising?

Look for parts in the essay where you have to reread the sentence, or part of the sentence, several times in order to understand the point.

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Doing the Work:

Trade with your partner one of the essays each of you has written on any topic. Read through the essay carefully, noting those areas where ideas are scattered, sentences seem out of place, or ideas seem unclear. Rewrite those sections in the paper you are reading, making those sections more clear.

After each of you has finished, go over the revised essays and discuss with each other what you have done and why you did it.

Discuss strategies that you have developed for revising work to express ideas clearly.

Developing the skills to revise one's own work is the key to good writing. In addition, the correlation between revising skills and success on the multiple-choice writing test is very high. The better your students revise, the better they will do in writing wherever they need it in their own lives, and the better they will do on the test.

4. Sharing with Others

Discuss with others in the class ways you and your partner have revised writing in order to make it clearer. Put the ideas into your Revising Journal.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What ideas about writing and revising did you get from your work on your partner's essay?

How can revising the essays of others help you in working on your own essay?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Have your revisions improved the essay?

In what ways do you think it is now a better essay? Explain.

Using the strategies for revising that you have developed by looking at the work of others, read one of your own essays and revise it for clear expression of ideas.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

How can careful revising improve the essay you have written?

What new essay writing strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?

Introduction to Writing

Learning Project ❹

Revising for Mechanics and Usage

Learning Project 4 addresses the areas in mechanics and usage where errors are most frequently made: subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, sentences fragments, sentence structure, and punctuation. Again, we have the learners working to revise specific areas of the written examples in PA and checking their own work against the multiple-choice questions.

You may find in the Learning Project that your learners need much more practice in certain areas of usage; you will want to provide more work from other resources for those who need it. Within each of the IAs in this Learning Project we offer several opportunities for you to provide direct instruction or additional practice. You may refer to Appendix E for a resource list. You are the best judge of what your classes need.

The practice in revision against the PA is an excellent method for your learners to prepare for the multiple-choice part of the GED Language Arts, Writing test. The test itself can be confusing, as the answers range widely among a variety of usage errors and style issues. The better at revising the test-taker is, the better able he or she will be to pass this portion of the test.

Your learners may also find that they have corrected an error differently from the test choices. This is an opportunity to discuss the many ways there are to say something correctly. If they can identify the correct choice because of the revising they have done, they have shown they understand the task at hand.

Again in this Learning Project, your learners will practice looking for individual errors in mechanics and usage: one time for verbs, then for sentence structure issues and finally for punctuation. As they become adept, they can consider all mechanics and usage questions in one revision sweep.

For other questions about the GED Writing Test, you may refer to Frequently Asked Questions on the GED Writing Test, in the Appendix.

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Learning Project ❹ Revising for Mechanics and Usage

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 4-1: Revising Your Essays for Verb Issues

1. Identifying the Problem

In this Inquiry Activity, you will explore how to revise an essay to eliminate incorrect use of verbs.

Research has shown us that preparation for the multiple-choice portion of the writing test is best accomplished by gaining skill in revision. In Learning Project 4, students will revise certain portions of each of the written passages used in the PA version of the GED Practice Test. We ask them to make their own revisions first, then direct them to consider selected questions from the PA, and compare their revision to the possible answer choices. Since revision may go in many directions, some of their work is likely to be far beyond the occasional correction sought. They may also correct things not brought up by the PA.

You will practice with verb revision first on GED writing passages, next on some of your classmates' essays, and then on your own. First we start with revising a passage from the GED writing test, which is found here.

1. *Read the whole passage to get an indication of what the passage is about. Do not read word for word, or try to find errors, or try to correct anything. Just scan the passage.*
2. *The particular paragraphs you will be asked to revise for verb issues will be paragraphs A, B, and C. Read these paragraphs word for word to get a sense of where there might be some verb issues in the paragraphs. Again, don't try to correct specific errors yet; just read the paragraph as someone who is looking to revise the verbs of the paragraphs if needed.*

How to Take Photographs

(A)

(1) Almost everyone have had the desire to take a picture at one time or another. (2) Some even regard photographs as an art form, while others snap pictures to send to family members. (3) Knowing some of the basics of photography will help you take better pictures.

(B)

(4) One of the first decisions to make is whether to photograph in color or you can use black and white. (5) Black-and-white photographs, still high in popularity, creates a very artistic mood. (6) Color, on the other hand, may be more appropriate for pictures of the family reunion or autumn landscapes.

(C)

(7) Film speed is also important. (8) If you are photographing in bright sunlight, you should select a film with a low speed. (9) This choice will have ensured the best possible print. (10) In low-light situations or if you are photographing rapid movement, a high-speed film is more appropriate. (11) This is because the film requires less light so you can set the shutter speed at a much faster rate to capture the action.

(D)

(12) If your camera has adjustable aperture and shutter speed settings, learning to use them can greatly enhance the quality of you're photographs. (13) Aperture refers to how wide open the lens is, which in turn determines how much light is allowed in. (14) Shutter speed describes how quickly the lens opens and shuts, controlling the amount of light that reaches the film. (15) A knowledge of these and other aspects of photography will help you to create the kinds of photos you want. (16) It takes practice, of course. (17) Practice helps you produce beautiful, memorable, and meaningful pictures.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Think about the task you are asked to do – revising an essay for verb issues – before actually revising. Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when revising your essay for verb issues during the GED test.

How would you define the terms proofread, edit, and revise?

How would you go about revising an essay for verb usage?

What are some of the verb issues that you might look for when revising an essay? List them here.

What do you know about the verb issues that you listed?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to revise any verb issues in paragraphs A, B, and C any way you can, even if you have to guess, but try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Doing the Work:

Working alone, or in pairs, do the following:

Reread the paragraphs and identify as many verbs in the paragraphs as you can. Make a list.

How did you go about identifying the verbs in the paragraphs?

Identify any verb usage that may be incorrect.

Make the corrections to verb usage that you deem appropriate.

How did you identify any verb usage that you thought may be incorrect?

Give the reasons for the corrections you did make to the verbs.

Find support for the corrections you made in an English Handbook or text.

Look at Question 19 from the PA. It refers to Sentence 1 in the passage.

19. Sentence 1. **Almost everyone have had the desire to take a picture at one time or another.**

Which correction should be made to sentence 1?
(1) replace Almost with Generally
(2) change have to has
(3) insert a comma after desire
(4) replace to take with taking
(5) no correction is necessary

Did you make a change that is the same as or similar to one of these options? Discuss any similarities with your partner. If you are not sure about the answer to this question, ask your instructor.

The correct answer is (2) change have to has. Everyone is a singular noun; it takes its number from the noun one, rather than from the adjective every.

Discussion of this answer might also raise the point that this Activity is about verbs and choice (2) is the only choice addressing verbs.

Now look at Question 22 from the PA:

22. Sentence 9: **This choice will have ensured the best possible print.**

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of this sentence. If the original is the best way, choose option (1).
(1) will have ensured
(2) has ensured
(3) has been ensuring
(4) will ensure
(5) had ensured

Did you make a change that is the same as or similar to one of these options? Discuss any similarities with your partner. If you are not sure about the answer to this question, ask your instructor.

The correct answer is (2) has ensured. The passage is written in the present tense, as advice and directions usually are. The choice of film speed to select in the present will give good results in the future.

Review the list of verb issues you made in step 2, Becoming Familiar with the Problem.

Do you want to add any more verb issues to the list?

How many verb issues that you listed were not in the paragraphs?

With your partner, develop an approach that you might use to locate and revise the verbs in your essay. Put your approach in a Revising Journal. (You will add to this Journal as you work through these Inquiry Activities and Learning Projects.)

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *Do the following in your small group:*
Discuss the process used to find the verbs in the paragraphs;
Discuss each group member's list of possible verb issues to look for when reviewing and revising your writing;
Discuss all the corrections made to the verbs in the paragraphs;
Discuss how you arrived at your answer to the multiple-choice questions compared to the possible answer choices;
Discuss the reasons for the corrections and the support found in the text for the corrections; and
Share your Revising Journal entry for locating possible verb issues and revising verbs in your writing.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*
The different ways the group members used to find verbs and verb issues in the paragraphs;
The corrections made to the verbs in the paragraphs;
The reasons for the changes made to the verbs and the support found in the text for the changes;
Discuss the different processes used to find verbs in the paragraphs;
Come up with a master list of verb issues that you might look for when reviewing and revising your writing; and
Discuss each class member's Journal Entries for locating verb issues and the methods for revising verbs.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

We have discussed sentence mechanics in the revision process and did not introduce mechanics during the writing process. Can you get a subject to write about, develop, and organize ideas about the subject, and then write a rough draft of an essay without focusing on the sentence mechanics? Explain.

You may find that the process of creating and then refining takes some time for students who are accustomed to thinking more about mechanics than developing ideas. Focus on the topic, organization of ideas, and details are the driving factors in good writing. The mechanics and usage issues can be tidied up after the ideas are written down.

What have you learned about the revision process in this Inquiry Activity?

What have you learned about spotting verb issues in writing in this Inquiry Activity?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Let's practice what you learned about spotting verb issues in your partner's writing.

Exchange essays you and your partner each wrote.

Locate as many of the verbs used in your partner's essay as you can.

What are some of the verb issues (the ones that are right and wrong, if any) that are presented in your partner's essay?

How many of the verb issues are on your verb issue list? How many new ones are there?

Correct all verb issues that need to be changed.

Discuss with your partner the corrections made, if any, and find textbook support for those issues that you have corrected.

Some people enjoy revising so much that they do far more than they need to. Others may need to learn to look for possible errors. In all cases, practice will tend to bring discernment.

How can you learn to spot possible verb issues in your own writing at home or on the job?

Pick one of the essays you have written (preferably one not already corrected), and mark all the verbs in the essay, and correct any verb issues that need correcting.

Exchange essays with a partner and discuss the corrections each of you made to your own essays.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What kind of revising strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?

Are you more comfortable revising your essay for verb tense issues? Explain.

Can you use your revising techniques for finding verb tense issues when you take the GED? Explain.

If you need more help with recognizing and correcting verb issues, ask your instructor for more activities.

Learning Project ❹ Revising for Mechanics and Usage

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 4-2: Revising Your Essays to Eliminate Sentence Fragments

1. Identifying the Problem

In this Inquiry Activity, you will be exploring how to revise an essay to remove fragments and to have clearly expressed sentences.

You will practice with revision first on GED writing passages, next on some of your classmates' essays, and then on your own. First we start with revising a passage from the GED writing test, which is found here.

1. *Read the whole passage to get an indication of what the passage is about. Do not try to find errors or make corrections.*
2. *The particular paragraph in which you will be asked to revise fragments is paragraph B. Read the paragraph carefully and get a sense of where there might be some sentence issues. Again, don't try to correct specific errors yet; just read the paragraph as someone who is looking to revise the sentences if needed.*

Trotter Institute of Electronics
"Training for the Future"

Mr. Carlos Montanez
286 Greencrest Street
Houston, TX 77001

Dear Mr. Montanez:

(A)

(1) What does it take to get a good job? (2) You probably have read newspaper articles about how job opportunities are declining today. (3) At the same time, however there are occupations in which opportunities are expanding. (4) The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics gave the following report. (5) The report states that in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by 21 percent. (6) As an electronics technician, you can expect to have your choice of many high-paying jobs with excellent working conditions. (7) That means that for every 10 electronics technicians now working, two more will be needed.

(B)

(8) One of the best aspects of an electronics education was that you don't ever have to leave home to get one. (9) The Trotter Institute of Electronics, offers a one-year correspondence course that leads straight to a Certificate of Electronics. (10) You could soon be on your way to a career in electronics. (11) A career filled with excitement and promise.

(C)

(12) You probably think that any course offered by the Trotter Institute would be expensive. (13) Because you get textbooks, assignments, and consultation for only $450.00, and this includes employment counseling after you graduate, this will surprise you. (14) You can see now that getting a better job is easier than you thought.

(D)

(15) To prepare for a better job with a great future, complete the enclosed registration form. (16) Within 10 days, you'll move toward an interesting and rewarding new career. (17) As mentioned above in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by dramatic proportions. (18) Don't wait to take advantage of this exciting career opportunity.

Yours truly,

Michael T. Langford

Michael T. Langford
Admissions Counselor

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Think about the task you are asked to do, revising an essay to remove sentence fragments and make the sentences clear, before actually revising. Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when revising your essay for fragment and sentence issues during the GED test.

What is a sentence fragment?

For beginning or lower level writers, fragments are a big problem. You may find that many of your students will need more work in this area of mechanics and usage than in any other.

How would you go about revising an essay to change fragments to proper sentences to make sentences clear?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to revise any sentence fragments in paragraph B any way you can, even if you have to guess, but be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Doing the Work:

Working alone, or in pairs, do the following:

- *Reread the paragraph and identify fragments.*
- *How did you go about identifying the fragments in the paragraph?*
- *Give the reasons you determined a sentence was really a fragment.*
- *Revise any fragments.*
- *Find support for the corrections you made in an English Handbook or text.*

Take a look at question 16 in PA:

16. Sentences 10 and 11: **You could soon be on your way to a career in electronics. A career filled with excitement and promise.**

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of these sentences? If the original is the best way, choose option (1).

(1) in electronics. A career filled
(2) in electronics, but a career filled
(3) in electronics and in addition, the career will be filled
(4) in electronics, a career filled
(5) no correction is necessary

- *Did you make a change that is the same as or similar to one of these options? Discuss any similarities with your partner. If you are not sure about the answer to this question, ask your instructor.*

The correct answer is (4) in electronics, a career filled. Both answers (2) and (3) correct the fragment issue, but they have other difficulties. Choice (2) in electronics, but a career filled shows an opposition that does not exist. Choice (3) in electronics and in addition, the career will be filled is not supported by the letter, which asserts that the career is exciting and promising.

This is the only question in PA addressing sentence fragments.

Develop with your partner an approach that you might use to locate and revise, if needed, fragments in your essay. Put your approach in a Revising Journal. (You will add to this Journal as you work through these Inquiry Activities and Learning Projects.)

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *Do the following in your small group:*

List any fragment you found in the paragraphs, and discuss any different opinions about whether there is a fragment;
Discuss all the corrections made to sentences in the paragraph;
Discuss the reasons for the corrections and the support found in the text for the corrections;
Discuss your correction to Sentence 11 and compare it to the possible corrections given in question 16;
Discuss the process used to find the fragments in the paragraphs; and
Share your Revising Journal entry for revising fragments in your writing.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*

The different ways the group members used to find fragments in the paragraph;
The corrections made to the sentences in the paragraph;
The reasons the changes were made and the support found in the text for the changes; and
Discuss each class member's Journal Entries for locating fragments and the methods for revising them.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What have you learned about the revision process in this Inquiry Activity?

What have you learned about spotting fragments in writing in this Inquiry Activity?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Let's practice what you learned about spotting fragments and unclear sentences in your partner's writing.

Exchange essays you and your partner each wrote.

Determine if there are any fragments in your partner's essay and note them.

Revise sentence fragments.

Discuss with your partner the corrections made, if any, and find textbook support for those fragment or sentences that you have corrected.

How can you learn to spot fragments and unclear sentences in your own writing at home or on the job?

Pick one of the essays you have written (preferably one not already corrected) and mark any fragments or unclear sentences in the essay and correct them.

Exchange essays with a partner and discuss the corrections each of you made to your own essays.

You may wish to extend this work on fragments by having the entire class correct volunteered essays for sentence fragments using an overhead projector. One of the strongest teaching writing strategies is having the group correct each other's work as a whole.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What kind of revising strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of the IA worked best for you? Explain.

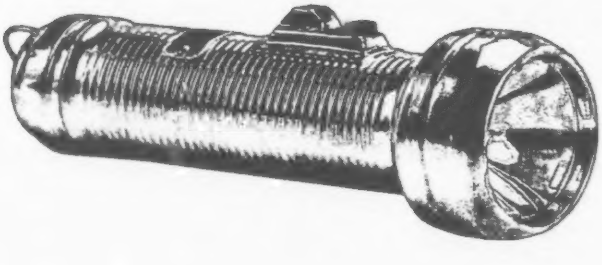
What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?

Are you more comfortable revising your essay for fragments and unclear sentences? Explain.

Can you use your revising techniques for finding fragments and unclear sentences when you take the GED? Explain.

If you need more help with recognizing and correcting fragments and unclear sentences, ask your instructor for more help.



Learning Project ❹ Revising for Mechanics and Usage

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 4-3: Using Compound and Complex Sentences to Revise Your Essays

1. Identifying the Problem

In this Inquiry Activity, you will explore how to revise an essay using compound and complex sentences so your essay will be more effective.

You will practice with revision first on GED writing passages, next on some of your classmates' essays, and then on your own. First we start with revising a passage from the GED writing test, which is found here.

1. *Read the whole passage to get an indication of what the passage is about. Do not read word for word, or try to find errors.*
2. *In this Inquiry Activity we are going to concentrate on how sentences are made up and how to write effective sentences. You will be asked to revise the sentences in paragraphs A and C. You will be asked to locate unclear sentences and revise them so they are clearer or combine two sentences so that they show a more direct relationship between two thoughts.*
3. *Read paragraphs A and C word for word to get a sense of where a sentence could be made clearer or two adjoining sentences could be combined. Again, don't try to correct specific unclear sentences yet; just read the paragraph as someone who is looking to revise the sentences in the paragraphs if needed.*

Michael Carper, Manager
Brighton Antiques and Collectibles
1540 Park Avenue
Sweetwater, VA 23690

Dear Mr. Carper:

(A)

(1) I am now writing to complain about the poor delivery service offered by your store, as you have not replied to my repeated phone messages. (2) Not only have your delivery department wasted my time, but also it has damaged my property.

(B)

(3) When I bought a sofa from you a month ago, I was being told that it would be delivered the next day, Tuesday. (4) I waited at home all day for the delivery, but nobody came. (5) Whenever I tried calling you, your phone was busy. (6) On Wednesday mourning, you phoned to say that because the delivery truck had to have its brakes repaired, the sofa could not be delivered until the following week.

(C)

(7) That Friday the sofa arrived. (8) I was leaving for work. (9) The delivery men arrived not only at an inconvenient time, but also delivered the wrong sofa. (10) After I complained for over an hour, the delivery men returned the sofa to the store. (11) Two weeks later, they returned with the sofa I had ordered. (12) Unfortunately, as they carried it into the living room, they chipped the paint on the walls broke a vase, and scratched a chest of drawers. (13) Instead of apologizing, it was told to me it was not their responsibility.

(D)

(14) I am enclosing an estimate of $500 for the damage. (15) If you do not pay it, I will contact a lawyer.

Sincerely,

Debra Weddington

Debra Weddington

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Think about the task you are asked to do, using compound and complex sentences to make sentences clearer or to combine sentences to show a more direct relationship between two thoughts, before actually revising. Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when revising your essay for fragment and sentence issues during the GED test.

1. What do you know about making sentences clear?

2. What do you know about combining two sentences into one?

3. What do you know about compound sentences and complex sentences?

You may find that this is a good place for a "burst lecture" or some direct instruction on sentence structure.

4. How can you make two simple sentences into a compound sentence?

One point that will be good for students to take away is that the ideas in both clauses of the compound sentence are equal in importance, and their relationship is from similarity.

5. How can you make two simple sentences into a complex sentence?

One clause in the complex sentence contains the more important ideas. The other clause or clauses modify the idea or ideas in the main clause. The relationship is one of support to the main idea.

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to use compound and complex sentences in paragraphs A and C any way you can, even if you have to guess, but try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Doing the Work:

Working alone, or in pairs, do the following:

- *Reread the paragraphs and identify sentences that might be more effective if placed in compound or complex sentences.*
- *How did you go about identifying the sentences that could be made into compound or complex sentences in the paragraphs?*
- *Revise the sentences you found that could be made into compound or complex sentences.*
- *Give the reasons you determined the sentences would be more effective if they were made into compound or complex sentences.*
- *Find support for your revisions of compound and complex sentences in an English Handbook or text.*
- *Look at question 1 in PA:*

1. Sentence 1: **I am now writing to complain about the poor delivery service offered by your store, as you have not replied to my repeated phone messages.**

The most effective revision of sentence 1 would begin with which group of words?

(1) Because you have not replied to my repeated phone messages, I am writing
(2) Having written to complain, the poor delivery service
(3) Your store, delivering poor service, and I am now phoning
(4) I had written and am now phoning and will complain
(5) Having delivered your store such poor service, I am now writing

- *Did you make a change that is the same as or similar to one of these options? Discuss any similarities with your partner. If you are not sure about the answer to this question, ask your instructor.*

The correct answer is (1) Because you have not replied to my repeated phone messages, I am writing. This is the one choice offered that shows the reason for the letter and the writer's earlier activity. Your students have written other versions that also indicate the relationship of the ideas clearly; this would be a good time to talk about many ways to say something well. The other choices create more problems for the reader than they solve: Option (2) is a dangling modifier which seems to say that the service has done the writing; choice (3) has the writer phoning, a contradiction to reality; choice (4) also has her phoning in the present, and (5) has the writer giving the store poor service, instead of the other way around. You might have some fun going over these answers as a whole group.

- *Now look at question 6 in PA:*

6. Sentences 7 & 8: **That Friday the sofa arrived. I was leaving for work.**

Which is the most effective combination of sentences 7 and 8?

(1) That Friday the sofa arrived, I was leaving for work.
(2) Leaving for work that Friday, the sofa arrived.
(3) That Friday, as I was leaving for work, the sofa arrived.
(4) The sofa arriving on that Friday while I was leaving for work.
(5) That Friday, the sofa arrived and I was leaving for work.

- *What is the time sequence in these two sentences? Which sentence has the more important fact in it?*

- *Did you make a change that is the same as or similar to one of these options? Discuss any similarities with your partner. If you are not sure about the answer to this question, ask your instructor.*

Here, too, you may wish to inject some direct instruction. The correct answer is (3). It shows that the sofa arrived as the writer was getting ready to leave. The arrival of the sofa is the more important idea; its awkward timing is reason for complaint.

- *What comma rules are associated with compound sentences?*

- *What comma rules are associated with complex sentences?*

These usage issues may need some further work.

- *Develop with your partner an approach to use compound and/or complex sentences to revise unclear sentences or combine sentences in your essay. Put your approaches in a Revising Journal. (You will add to this Journal as you work through these Inquiry Activities and Learning Projects.)*

The kinds of sentence structures (simple, compound, and complex) are one of the ways a writer develops his or her style. We will be looking at style more closely in Learning Project 5.

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *Do the following in your small group:*

List the sentences that you determined could be made clearer and more effective by making them into compound or complex sentences in the paragraphs, and discuss any different opinions about whether the sentences are clearer because they have been combined into compound or complex sentences;
Discuss all the revisions made to sentences in the designated paragraphs;

Discuss the reasons for the revisions and the support found in the text for the revisions;
Discuss the process used to find sentences that could be made into compound or complex sentences;
Discuss the answer choices in Question 6 in PA; which choice shows the relationship between the two facts, and how you arrived at your choice;
Discuss the comma rules associated with compound and complex sentences; and
Share your Revising Journal entry for using compound and complex sentences to revise unclear sentences or combine sentences.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*

The different ways the group members used compound and complex sentences to clarify meaning in sentences or combine sentences;
The revisions made to the sentences in the paragraphs;
The reasons for the changes that were made and the support found in the text for the changes;
The comma rules associated with compound and complex sentences; and
Discuss each class member's Journal Entries for using compound and complex sentences to revise unclear sentences or combine sentences.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What have you learned about the revision process in this Inquiry Activity?

What have you learned about using compound and complex sentences to make sentences clearer or combining sentences in this Inquiry Activity?

What have you learned about comma usage with compound and complex sentences?

What have you learned about identifying and using subordinating or coordinating conjunctions in your study of compound and complex sentences?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Let's practice what you learned about compound and complex sentences to clarify or combine sentences in your partner's writing.

Exchange essays you and your partner each wrote.

Determine if there are any unclear sentences that could be made into compound or complex sentences in your partner's essay and note them.

Revise unclear sentences and combine sentences using the principles of compound and complex sentences you have explored in this Inquiry Activity.

Discuss with your partner the revisions made, if any, and find textbook support for the compound or complex sentences that you created.

How can you learn to spot unclear sentences in your own writing at home or on the job?

Pick one of the essays you have written (preferably one not already corrected) and:

- *Mark all compound sentences and complex sentences in the essay.*

- *Find sentences that are unclear or would be made more effective if revised into a compound or complex sentence.*
- *Revise all sentences you found that should be revised.*

Exchange essays with a partner, and discuss the corrections each of you made to your own essays.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What kind of revising strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?

Are you more comfortable revising your essay using compound and complex sentences? Explain.

Can you use your revising techniques for using compound and complex sentences when you take the GED? Explain.

If you need more help with recognizing and using compound and complex sentences, ask your instructor for more help.

Learning Project ❹ Revising for Mechanics and Usage

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 4-4: Revising for Mechanics and Usage

1. Identifying the Problem

In this Inquiry Activity, you will explore how to revise an essay to eliminate incorrect use of commas.

Many students are confused about commas, and some have spent considerable time worrying over comma usage.

You will practice with revision first on GED writing passages, next on some of your classmates' essays, and then on your own. First we start with revising a passage from the GED writing test, which is found here.

1. *Read the whole passage to get an indication of what the passage is about. Do not try to find errors or make any corrections.*
2. *In this Inquiry Activity we are going to concentrate on the correct use of commas. You will be asked to revise the sentences for comma usage in paragraphs A, B, and D. You will be asked to locate sentences in which commas should be used or to eliminate commas that are incorrectly used.*
3. *Read paragraphs A, B, and D word for word to get a sense of which sentences might need a comma or those that don't need the comma that is there. Again, don't try to correct specific sentences yet; just read the paragraph as someone who is looking to revise possible comma misuse.*

Trotter Institute of Electronics
"Training for the Future"

Mr. Carlos Montanez
286 Greencrest Street
Houston, TX 77001

Dear Mr. Montanez:

(A)

(1) What does it take to get a good job? (2) You probably have read newspaper articles about how job opportunities are declining today. (3) At the same time, however there are occupations in which opportunities are expanding. (4) The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics gave the following report. (5) The report states that in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by 21 percent. (6) As an electronics technician, you can expect to have your choice of many high-paying jobs with excellent working conditions. (7) That means that for every 10 electronics technicians now working, two more will be needed.

(B)

(8) One of the best aspects of an electronics education was that you don't ever have to leave home to get one. (9) The Trotter Institute of Electronics, offers a one-year correspondence course that leads straight to a Certificate of Electronics. (10) You could soon be on your way to a career in electronics. (11) A career filled with excitement and promise.

(C)

(12) You probably think that any course offered by the Trotter Institute would be expensive. (13) Because you get textbooks, assignments, and consultation for only $450.00, and this includes employment counseling after you graduate, this will surprise you. (14) You can see now that getting a better job is easier than you thought.

(D)

(15) To prepare for a better job with a great future, complete the enclosed registration form. (16) Within 10 days, you'll move toward an interesting and rewarding new career. (17) As mentioned above in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by dramatic proportions. (18) Don't wait to take advantage of this exciting career opportunity.

Yours truly,

Michael T. Langford

Michael T. Langford
Admissions Counselor

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Think about the task you are asked to do, reviewing sentences to determine if commas are correctly used or needed, before actually revising. Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when revising your essay for comma usage during the GED test.

1. *What do you know about using commas in a sentence?*

2. *How many comma rules do you know? Explain each of the rules that you can.*

3. *What techniques do you use to check on the use of commas in your writing?*

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to add or correct any comma usage in paragraphs A, B, and D any way you can, even if you have to guess, but try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Doing the Work:

Working alone, or in pairs, do the following:

- *Reread the paragraphs and identify possible misuse of commas or places where commas are needed.*
- *How did you go about identifying the comma issues in the paragraphs?*

Overuse of commas is common. Commas alone cannot correct poor writing.

- *Change or add commas in the sentences you found that needed revision.*
- *Give the reasons for the why you determined the commas were incorrectly used or should be added.*
- *Were any of the corrections to commas that you made to the passage included in the comma rules that you listed in Step 2 above? Revise your list to include any new comma rules you thought of.*
- *Look at Question 11 from PA:*

11. Sentence 3: **At the same time, however there are occupations in which opportunities are expanding.**

Which correction should be made to sentence 3?
(1) insert a comma after however
(2) replace there with they're
(3) insert a comma after occupations
(4) remove in after occupations
(5) no correction is necessary

- *Did you make a change that is the same as or similar to one of these options? Discuss any similarities with your partner. If you are not sure about the answer to this question, ask your instructor.*

The correct answer is (1) insert a comma after however. However is an interjection and should be offset by commas. People often forget the second comma.

- *Now look at Question 15 from PA:*

15. Sentence 9: **The Trotter Institute of Electronics, offers a one-year course that leads straight to a Certificate of Electronics.**

Which correction should be made to sentence 9?
(1) remove the comma after Electronics
(2) change offers to offering
(3) insert a comma after course
(4) change leads to led
(5) replace straight with strait

- *Did you make a change that is the same as or similar to one of these options? Discuss any similarities with your partner. If you are not sure about the answer to this question, ask your instructor.*

The correct answer is (1) remove the comma after Electronics. In a simple sentence, the subject and the verb should not be separated by a comma. (Selection (3) simply compounds the error. There is no subject in what now looks like an offset clause.)

- *Find support for the revisions in comma usage you made to the passage in an English handbook or text.*
- *Find support in your English handbook or text for the comma rules you have listed in Step 2 and added to in this Step.*
- *Develop an approach to review comma usage in sentences and to correct comma usage in your essay with your partner. Put your approaches in a Revising Journal. (You will add to this Journal as you work through these Inquiry Activities and Learning Projects.)*

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *Do the following in your small group:*
Discuss all the comma revisions made to sentences in the designated paragraphs;
Discuss the reasons for the revisions and the support found in the text for the revisions;
Discuss the answers to the two questions in PA;
Discuss the process used to find comma issues in the paragraphs; and
Share your Revising Journal entry for revising sentences for correct comma usage.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*
The comma revisions made to the sentences in the paragraphs;
The reasons for the changes were made and the support found in the text changes; and
Discuss each class member's journal entries used for revising sentences for correct comma usage.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What have you learned about the revision process in this Inquiry Activity?

What have you learned about commas in this Inquiry Activity?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Were you able to use the comma rules for compound and complex sentences that you learned from the last Inquiry Activity? Explain.

While Sentence 3 is a complex sentence, the comma error involves interjection, not the subordinate clause. Sentence 9 is a simple sentence.

Let's practice what you learned about commas to revise comma usage in your partner's writing.

Exchange essays you and your partner each wrote.

Determine if there are any commas usage issues and note them.

Either add commas or take commas out using the comma rules you have explored in this Inquiry Activity.

Discuss with your partner the revisions made, if any, and find textbook support for the commas that you added or took away.

How can you learn to spot comma issues in your own writing at home or on the job?

Pick one of the essays you have written (preferably one not already corrected) and:

Mark all the commas you used and review to determine if commas are needed;

Make the revisions to comma usage that you think are needed;

Determine the comma rules that support the changes you made;

Determine the comma rules that support the commas you didn't change.

Exchange essays with a partner and discuss the corrections each of you made to your own essays.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What kind of revising strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?

Are you more comfortable about your knowledge of when to use commas? Explain.

Can you use your revising techniques for comma issues when you take the GED? Explain.

If you need more help with recognizing and revising comma usage, ask your instructor for more help.

Introduction to Writing

Learning Project ❺

Revising for Style

In this final Revision Learning Project, we raise the concept of Style. Style does not have specific rules and boundaries. Style is as personal as one's voice, handwriting, or manner of dressing. Style also depends upon what is being written, and to whom it is addressed. Personal letters have a different style from personnel handbooks.

It may be that the issue of style in writing is a new concept to your learners. They will have some ideas about style as it applies to other areas and can take that application (Becoming Familiar with the Problem) to make the connection to writing and how they might develop their own style or voice.

Again in this Learning Project, we focus on the writing samples in the PA. In Inquiry Activity 5-1, we ask the learners to look at the style used by each of the two letter writers, then have them rewrite one of the letters in their own style.

Inquiry Activity 5-2 covers the Passive Voice. Most editors and writing instructors prefer the active voice for its immediacy; most new writers, however, like the passive voice for its ponderous sound. Because the passive voice is not grammatically incorrect, the choice whether to use it or not is an issue of style.

This Learning Project is a very useful crossover into Reading. We suggest a number of writers in IA 5-3 who have strongly individual styles, but the issue of style can be discussed with any writer's work.

Learning Project ❺ Revising for Style

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 5-1: Looking at Style

1. Identifying the Problem

Moving from the more stable concepts of clarity, mechanics, and usage into issues of style puts us into shakier territory. One can find the rules for subject and verb agreement, but one cannot always say exactly why a particular phrasing is more pleasing.

Those who enjoy the craft of writing will begin to develop a personal style quite early. Others, who may be clear and correct in their writing, will show very little personal voice. Competent writers are aware of style, of words and phrases they like to use, sentence structures they find appealing. Developing a writing style is an important part of the writing and revising process for your learners.

In this Inquiry Activity we will consider the concept of Style, especially as it is demonstrated in writing. To look at how style might affect writing, you will read the two letters from Practice Test PA, which appear here.

1. *Read both letters to get an indication of what they are about. Do not try to find errors or make corrections.*
2. *In this Inquiry Activity we are going to concentrate on style. You will be asked to define style, and then to rewrite one of the following letters in your own style.*

Trotter Institute of Electronics
"Training for the Future"

Mr. Carlos Montanez
286 Greencrest Street
Houston, TX 77001

Dear Mr. Montanez:

(A)

(1) What does it take to get a good job? (2) You probably have read newspaper articles about how job opportunities are declining today. (3) At the same time, however there are occupations in which opportunities are expanding. (4) The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics gave the following report. (5) The report states that in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by 21 percent. (6) As an electronics technician, you can expect to have your choice of many high-paying jobs with excellent working conditions. (7) That means that for every 10 electronics technicians now working, two more will be needed.

(B)

(8) One of the best aspects of an electronics education was that you don't ever have to leave home to get one. (9) The Trotter Institute of Electronics, offers a one-year correspondence course that leads straight to a Certificate of Electronics. (10) You could soon be on your way to a career in electronics. (11) A career filled with excitement and promise.

(C)

(12) You probably think that any course offered by the Trotter Institute would be expensive. (13) Because you get textbooks, assignments, and consultation for only $450.00, and this includes employment counseling after you graduate, this will surprise you. (14) You can see now that getting a better job is easier than you thought.

(D)

(15) To prepare for a better job with a great future, complete the enclosed registration form. (16) Within 10 days, you'll move toward an interesting and rewarding new career. (17) As mentioned above in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by dramatic proportions. (18) Don't wait to take advantage of this exciting career opportunity.

Yours truly,

Michael T. Langford

Michael T. Langford
Admissions Counselor

Here are some problem clarification questions or directions you may want to consider when "Identifying the Problem" in the Language Arts, Writing Test.

What do you think the word style means?

Learners will have a variety of answers and will find that whatever text or resource books they use will have others. The best way to understand style is to recognize the elements that make it up.

What might people mean when they talk about the style of clothes, or cars, or music?

Everybody recognizes different styles of music, clothing, cars, and other parts of our everyday life. From this discussion, your learners can transfer their knowledge of style to writing.

What do you think it means when someone says they like your style?

What might style have to do with writing?

Even our handwriting betrays something about our personality. The words that we use, the sentence structures we prefer, and the ways we express ourselves all reflect our own personal style or voice.

Michael Carper, Manager
Brighton Antiques and Collectibles
1540 Park Avenue
Sweetwater, VA 23690

Dear Mr. Carper:

(A)

(1) I am now writing to complain about the poor delivery service offered by your store, as you have not replied to my repeated phone messages. (2) Not only have your delivery department wasted my time, but also it has damaged my property.

(B)

(3) When I bought a sofa from you a month ago, I was being told that it would be delivered the next day, Tuesday. (4) I waited at home all day for the delivery, but nobody came. (5) Whenever I tried calling you, your phone was busy. (6) On Wednesday mourning, you phoned to say that because the delivery truck had to have its brakes repaired, the sofa could not be delivered until the following week.

(C)

(7) That Friday the sofa arrived. (8) I was leaving for work. (9) The delivery men arrived not only at an inconvenient time, but also delivered the wrong sofa. (10) After I complained for over an hour, the delivery men returned the sofa to the store. (11) Two weeks later, they returned with the sofa I had ordered. (12) Unfortunately, as they carried it into the living room, they chipped the paint on the walls broke a vase, and scratched a chest of drawers. (13) Instead of apologizing, it was told to me it was not their responsibility.

(D)

(14) I am enclosing an estimate of $500 for the damage. (15) If you do not pay it, I will contact a lawyer.

Sincerely,

Debra Weddington

Debra Weddington

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the topics, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when you take the writing test.

1. *Is there a writer whom you particularly enjoy reading? What is it about that person's writing that makes you enjoy his or her work?*
2. *Think about how a person goes about expressing his or her ideas. How does a writer convey ideas to his or her readers?*
3. *Can you recognize your partner's writing or some other of your classmates' writings? What are some of the indicators of their writing that you can use as identification?*

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Read the two letters in PA. As you read, try to identify words, phrases or sentences that one writer has used that the other would probably not use. Try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Planning: *Use your experience with writing to understand what makes the writing styles different. How will you use your experience to answer this question?*

Doing the work: *Working in pairs or small groups, answer the following questions or do the following activities. You should read the letters individually:*

Abstract ideas like style become much more clear when placed in a concrete context.

- *As you read, consider the purpose of the letter. How might that affect the style of the letter?*

A letter of complaint will have a very different approach and will use different words than a sales promotion.

- *What is the role of the person who has written it (supervisor, customer, sales person, customer service representative)? What difference might the role of the person make in the style of the letter?*
- *Compare your answers to your partner's.*
- *With your partner, develop a definition or understanding of style as it relates to writing that you both might use to revise a paragraph.*
- *Compare your definition of style with the definition in a writing or grammar text. What are some differences you might want to incorporate into your definition?*
- *Put your final definition in your Revising Journal. (You will add to this Journal as you work through these Inquiry Activities and Learning Projects.)*

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge of the revisions you made and the approach you have developed, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *Do the following in your small group:*

Compare your definition or understanding of style to others in the group.

Explain how you developed your understanding.

Compare the process each group member used as he/she analyzed the writing to define style. Agree on a process you might use during a test to identify issues of style.

Agree on the best way to define or understand style.

Discuss what you have learned about style.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*
The different ideas the group members had about style;
The understanding or definition your group considers best;
The reasons any other definitions are not as useful; and
The ways the group agrees that style might be important in a test.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How can learning about style help you revise?

How can knowing about a writer's style help you understand that person's writing better?

How might you use this understanding in your own work?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Choose one of the two letters and rewrite it in your own words. You may find it easier to list the important points in their proper order, and write your own letter without looking too closely at the original.

Rather than revise, most people would rather rewrite, which is what this activity asks for. You may wish to be stronger in encouraging the learners to list the points and then write their own letters. Some writers may prefer rewriting directly against the model. This, too, is a matter of style.

After you have written your own version of the letter, identify places where you made significant changes. Is the letter better in your version? Why?

As a general observation, neither letter used in PA is well-written. Several errors or awkward structures in each letter are not addressed in the questions.

Exchange letters with your partner, and read carefully the versions you wrote. Compare them to the original. As a reader, can you see some differences in style in the new letters when compared with the original?

Your learners will be looking at their own styles in the letters they wrote.

How would you use the skills you are developing to express ideas in your own style in your writing for this class and in your writing in the workplace?

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

Evaluate what you have learned about style as it appears in people's writing.

How can that understanding help you in your writing?

What kinds of writing strategies did you learn from this exercise?

Learning Project ❺ Revising for Style

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 5-2: Passive Voice

Deciding to use active or passive voice is an issue of style. Many young writers use passive voice because they think the ponderous, more formal result makes them seem better writers, or perhaps more grown up. Passive voice is often called the voice of bureaucracy because no one takes the responsibility to perform the action. Active voice is more immediate, more flexible in construction.

1. Identifying the Problem (Item #10)

Very generally, look over the passage and the question. (Don't read word for word or try to look for mistakes.)

Michael Carper, Manager
Brighton Antiques and Collectibles
1540 Park Avenue
Sweetwater, VA 23690

Dear Mr. Carper:

(A)

(1) I am now writing to complain about the poor delivery service offered by your store, as you have not replied to my repeated phone messages. (2) Not only have your delivery department wasted my time, but also it has damaged my property.

(B)

(3) When I bought a sofa from you a month ago, I was being told that it would be delivered the next day, Tuesday. (4) I waited at home all day for the delivery, but nobody came. (5) Whenever I tried calling you, your phone was busy. (6) On Wednesday mourning, you phoned to say that because the delivery truck had to have its brakes repaired, the sofa could not be delivered until the following week.

(C)

(7) That Friday the sofa arrived. (8) I was leaving for work. (9) The delivery men arrived not only at an inconvenient time, but also delivered the wrong sofa. (10) After I complained for over an hour, the delivery men returned the sofa to the store. (11) Two weeks later, they returned with the sofa I had ordered. (12) Unfortunately, as they carried it into the living room, they chipped the paint on the walls broke a vase, and scratched a chest of drawers. (13) Instead of apologizing, it was told to me it was not their responsibility.

(D)

(14) I am enclosing an estimate of $500 for the damage. (15) If you do not pay it, I will contact a lawyer.

Sincerely,

Debra Weddington

Debra Weddington

10. Sentence 13: **Instead of apologizing, it was told to me it was not their responsibility.**

Which correction should be made to sentence 13?

Here are problem-clarification questions or directions you may want to consider when "Identifying the Problem" in the Language Arts, Writing Test.

Read the sentence the question focuses on.

Note what seems awkward or poorly written in the sentence.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when you take the writing test.

1. Read the question.

2. What is the question asking you to do or to find out about the sentence?

3. What information in the sentence itself might be relevant to answering the question?

It is important to have the performer of the action named in the sentence if it is going to be written in active voice.

4. What do you know about the issues of grammar or style that this sentence addresses?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to answer the test question any way you can, even if you have to guess, but try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Planning: *Use your experience with similar sentences to make sense of this one. How will you use your knowledge of style to answer this question?*

Doing the Work: *Answer the following questions or do the following activities:*

- *Write your own version of the sentence, smoothing the awkward construction.*
- *Have you heard the term active voice or passive voice when dealing with verbs before?*

If your learners have no knowledge of active or passive voice or are very confused, insert a "burst lecture."

- *Describe active voice and passive voice in your own words.*
- *Find the discussion about active and passive voice in a grammar or writing text.*
- *What steps would you take when you change a sentence from the passive voice to the active voice?*
- *Now look at the answer choices to sentence 13.*
    (1) replace apologizing with being apologetic
    (2) remove the comma after apologizing
    (3) replace it was told to me with they told me
    (4) replace it was not their responsibility. with their responsibility it was not.
    (5) No correction is necessary
- *Is one of these choices similar to or the same as what you did to correct the sentence?*

You may find that many people changed the sentence to read "... I was told it was not their responsibility." While this is certainly an easier version to read, it leaves two usage problems. First is the dangling construction "Instead of apologizing."

They are the ones who should apologize, not I. Second is the pronoun their; it has no antecedent when I is the subject.

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *Do the following in your small group:*
Compare your sentence to others in the group.

Explain why you rewrote the sentence as you did it.

Agree on the correct answer to the multiple-choice; and

Discuss why each of the other answer choices is incorrect.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*
The different ways the group members rewrote the sentence;
The answer your group considers correct;
The reasons why the other answer choices are incorrect.

At the completion of all the group presentations, the class should discuss how they want to word the discussion of passive and active voice for their Revision Journals.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

Did you have to read the entire passage to rewrite the sentence into a better style? Explain.

What does this mean for you as a test taker?

Test takers need to be aware of the best use of their time. Rereading an entire passage several times will cost precious time and make the test taker immune to the actual words. (The more we reread, the more we skim.)

What do you need to know about verbs to handle active and passive voice?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

What is different about the relationship of the subject to the verb in the active voice and in the passive voice?

What other parts of the sentence, besides the verb, have to be changed when you change a sentence from the passive voice to the active voice?

Have you read materials at home or at work that are written predominately in the passive voice? What kind of materials are they? Why do you think the writers used the passive voice?

With an indeterminate subject, the passive voice is the better choice in writing.

Why do you think that business writing is often in the passive voice?

In what kind of writing would you use the passive voice? When is the active voice preferable?

Revise your partner's essay looking for sentences using the passive voice.

Where these sentences seem awkward, rewrite them into the active voice.

Discuss the resulting sentences and the process you used to change the sentences from active to passive voice.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

State and then evaluate what you have learned about the active and passive voices in this Inquiry Activity.

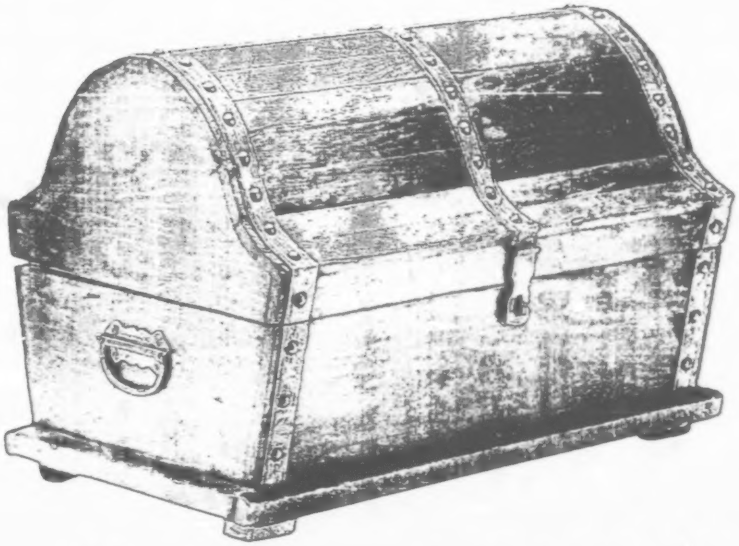
Is the use of the passive voice incorrect grammar or question of writing style? Explain and support your answer.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What kind of test-taking strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?



Learning Project ❺ Revising for Style

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 5-3: Recognizing the Writer's Voice

1. Identifying the Problem

In this Inquiry Activity we are going to look at writing passages that your instructor will provide to try to recognize the writer's voice.

This is a good opportunity to cross over to Reading and address a writer's style. Use any writer you enjoy reading and teaching. Since the students will be writing essays from generic, but personal topics, we suggest drawing from Dave Barry, E. B. White, Bill Bryson, David Sedaris, Maya Angelou, Brent Staples, and Annie Dillard.

Here are some problem clarification questions or directions you may want to consider when "Identifying the Problem" in the Language Arts, Writing Test.

Scan the passage:

What type of written communication is the passage?

Why do you think this passage was written?

How is the passage organized?

Note what stands out in the way the passage is written.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the passage, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when you take the writing test.

What do you know about the author of this passage?

Have you read other things by this writer? If you have, what do you expect this passage to be like when you read it?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Read the passage your instructor has given out. Try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Planning: *Use your experience with writing essays to make sense of this one. How will you use your experience to answer this question?*

Doing the Work: *Working in pairs or small groups, answer the following questions or do the following activities. You should read the essay individually:*

- *What can you say about sentence structure used by this writer? Are the sentences generally long, short, or is there a variety?*
- *How would you characterize the words the writer uses? Are they easy to read and understand, or are they difficult to read and unusual, words you have not often seen?*
- *Does the writing sound formal or friendly and conversational?*
- *What would you say defines the style of this writer?*
- *Why is recognizing style important?*

- *Do all writers have a style that can be identified?*

Not all writers have a style. In newspapers and magazines, the editors create a publication style that presents all the articles in essentially the same style. Signed columns sound very different because the individual writer stands out from the rest.

Many writers who pump out a lot of books in a specific genre (mystery, gothic, romance, action, science fiction) seem (and may be) interchangeable. The format is more important than the writing.

- *With your partner, develop a statement about the style of the author you have read.*

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge of the revisions you made and the approach you have developed, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *Do the following in your small group:*

Compare your discussion of the writer's style with others in the group.

Compare the process each group member used to analyze the author's work. Agree on a process you might use during a test to identify style of an author.

Agree on the best way to define a writer's style.

Discuss what you have learned about style and how it is shown.

Whole Class: *Report to the class:*

The different ways the group members went about identifying style,

The different indicators of style your group thought most effective,

What your group considers important about recognizing style, and

How knowing about style can be helpful during a test.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how well you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How has thinking about one writer's style helped you to understand about the writing process?

Why is recognizing the style of writing important to an understanding of the essay? Of the writing process?

Can you write in someone else's style? Why would this be difficult? How might it make the writing process easier for you?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

By now you have read several examples of your partner's work. What are some indicators in your partner's writing that can be considered his or her style?

What are some things in your own writing that can be considered a part of your style?

How might your recognition of your style or someone else's style help you in writing?

How would you use the skills you are developing to express ideas clearly in your own writing and in your writing in the workplace?

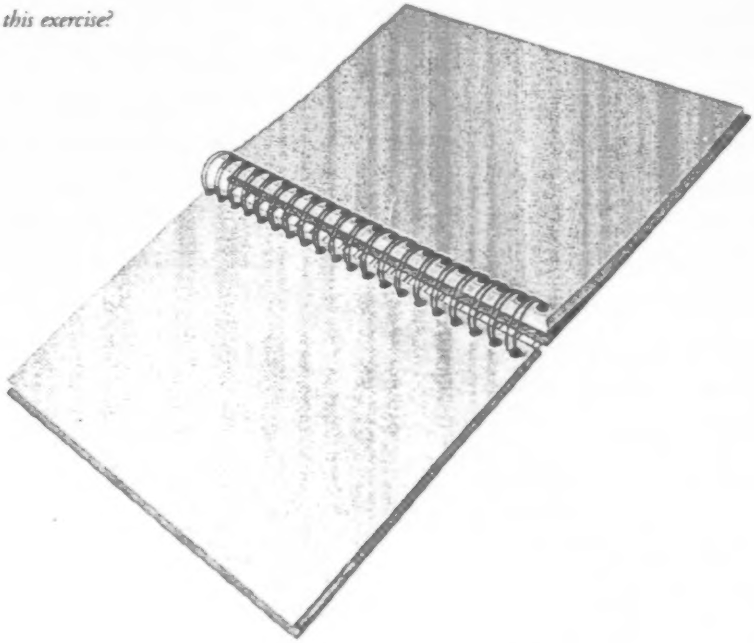
Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

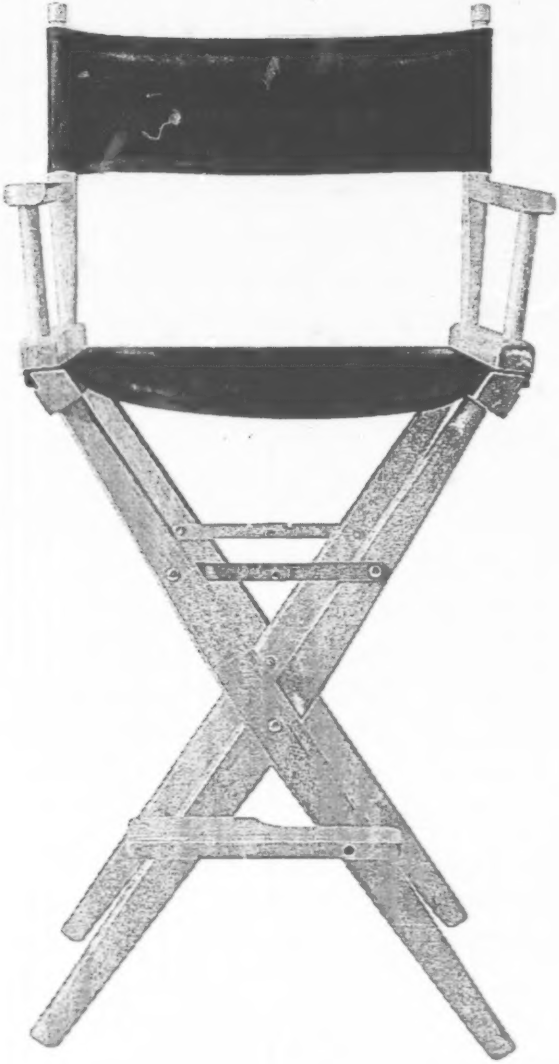
In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

Evaluate what you have learned about writing style.

How can understanding style help you write?

What kinds of writing strategies did you learn from this exercise?





Introduction to Writing

Learning Project ❻

Answering the Multiple-Choice Questions

The Inquiry Activities in this Learning Project may be helpful to learners who are close to taking the GED test as it helps them develop test-taking skills specifically for the writing portion and may also be helpful in answering all multiple-choice questions.

Learning Project ❻ Answering the Multiple-Choice Questions

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 6-1: Multiple-Choice Questions – Set 1

1. Identifying the Problem

In this Learning Project, you will explore one of the passages in the multiple-choice portion of the GED practice test and answer all the questions.

The Writing Learning Projects have 13 of the 25 multiple-choice questions embedded within the writing activities. The questions focused on in these two activities are many of those not already covered. These two activities can be used to develop test-taking strategies. Because the multiple-choice portion of the writing test can be confusing, with possible answers covering a wide range of issues, from spelling to punctuation to rewriting, you may find that some of your students will profit by devoting some time in developing strategies for approaching the test. The correct answers are starred in the teacher version.

1. *In this Inquiry Activity we are going to concentrate on the thinking it takes to answer the multiple-choice questions on the GED Writing Test. You will use all of the rules for clear expression and mechanics that you have explored in all the Learning Projects up to this one.*
2. *You will also be asked to develop test-taking strategies that use the knowledge you have gained about effective sentence revision and mechanics in a multiple-choice situation.*
3. *Read the whole passage to get an indication of what the passage is about.*
4. *Read the multiple-choice questions only. Don't read the answer choices at this time.*

Michael Carper, Manager
Brighton Antiques and Collectibles
1540 Park Avenue
Sweetwater, VA 23690

Dear Mr. Carper:

(A)

(1) I am now writing to complain about the poor delivery service offered by your store, as you have not replied to my repeated phone messages. (2) Not only have your delivery department wasted my time, but also it has damaged my property.

(B)

(3) When I bought a sofa from you a month ago, I was being told that it would be delivered the next day, Tuesday. (4) I waited at home all day for the delivery, but nobody came. (5) Whenever I tried calling you, your phone was busy. (6) On Wednesday mourning, you phoned to say that because the delivery truck had to have its brakes repaired, the sofa could not be delivered until the following week.

(C)

(7) That Friday the sofa arrived. (8) I was leaving for work. (9) The delivery men arrived not only at an inconvenient time, but also delivered the wrong sofa. (10) After I complained for over an hour, the delivery men returned the sofa to the store. (11) Two weeks later, they returned with the sofa I had ordered. (12) Unfortunately, as they carried it into the living room, they chipped the paint on the walls broke a vase, and scratched a chest of drawers. (13) Instead of apologizing, it was told to me it was not their responsibility.

(D)

(14) I am enclosing an estimate of $500 for the damage. (15) If you do not pay it, I will contact a lawyer.

Sincerely,

Debra Weddington

Debra Weddington

Directions: Choose the one best answer to each question.

Questions 1 through 10 refer to the following letter of complaint. The missing questions have been discussed in other learning projects.

Writing, Part I

2. Sentence 2: **Not only have your delivery department wasted my time, but also it has damaged my property.**

Which correction should be made to sentence 2?
(1) change only have to only has *
(2) remove the comma after time
(3) insert additionally after also
(4) change it has to it have
(5) replace it has with they have

3. Sentence 3: **When I bought a sofa from you a month ago, I was being told that it would be delivered the next day, Tuesday.**

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of this sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (1).
(1) was being told
(2) was told *
(3) had told
(4) have been told
(5) having been told

4. Sentence 5: **Whenever I tried calling you, your phone was busy.**

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of this sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (1).
(1) you, your phone was *
(2) you, your phone being
(3) you, your phone is
(4) you, and your phone was
(5) you and your phone were

5. Sentence 6: **On Wednesday mourning, you phoned to say that because the delivery truck had to have its brakes repaired, the sofa could not be delivered until the following week.**

Which correction should be made to this sentence?
(1) replace mourning with morning *
(2) insert a comma after phoned
(3) insert a comma after that
(4) replace brakes with breaks
(5) remove the comma after repaired

8. Sentence 11: **Two weeks later, they returned with the sofa I had ordered.**

Which revision should be made to the placement of sentence 11?
(1) remove sentence 11
(2) move sentence 11 to follow sentence 12
(3) begin a new paragraph with sentence 11 *
(4) move sentence 11 to the end of paragraph C
(5) Move sentence 11 to the end of paragraph D

9. Sentence 12: **Unfortunately, as they carried it into the living room, they chipped the paint on the walls broke a vase, and scratched a chest of drawers.**

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of this sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (1).
(1) paint on the walls broke
(2) paint on the walls, broke *
(3) paint on the walls, and broke
(4) paint, on the walls, broke
(5) paint, on the walls broke

Here are problem-clarification questions or directions you may want to consider when "Identifying the Problem" in the Language Arts, Writing Test.

Scan the passage:

What type of written communication is the passage?

Why do you think this passage was written?

How is the passage organized?

Why are the paragraphs lettered and the sentences numbered?

Read the sentence the question focuses on:

For each question, read the whole sentence or sentences and not just the underlined part, if any.

Find the paragraph in the passage in which the each sentence appears and scan that paragraph.

Note what may stand out in each sentence in the way that it is written.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when you take the writing test.

Read the question:

What is the question asking you to do or to find out about the sentence?

What information in the sentence itself might be relevant to answering the question?

Scan the answer choices:

1. *How would you describe these answer choices to someone else by just looking at them?*
2. *Read the answer choices to each question. What do you see in the answer choices?*
    - *How are the answer choices different from each other?*
    - *How are they the same?*
    - *What do the answer choices tell you about the question that was asked? About the sentence or sentences focused on?*
3. *What do you know about the areas of grammar or style that the answer choices in each problem represent?*
4. *What do you know about taking a multiple-choice writing test?*
5. *How do you plan to take this portion of the test?*

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to answer the multiple choice questions any way you can, even if you have to guess, but try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Planning: *Use your experience with similar sentences to make sense of this one.*

Doing the Work: *Answer the following questions or do the following activities:*

- *Read the first question carefully and try to correct the sentence without referring to the answer choices. (A step similar to estimating an answer in math.)*
- *Read the answer choices for the first question, choose one of the answer choices, and record the steps you used to choose the answer.*
- *Follow the same procedure for each of the remaining questions.*
- *Compare the multiple-choice answer you chose as correct with the one you selected without looking at the answer choices. How similar are the two answers?*

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *In your small group, compare your answers to each question to others in the group and explain why you chose each answer and how you found it. Compare the process each group member used to analyze the test question before studying the answer choices carefully. Agree on a process you might use during the writing portion of the test. Agree on the correct answer.*

For each question, discuss why each of the other answer choices is incorrect, and discuss what each group member learned about answering multiple-choice questions in the writing test.

Whole class: *Report to the class the different ways the group members found the correct answer for each question. Discuss the reasons why the other answer choices are incorrect for each question, and describe the process your group decided could be used to determine an answer before reading the answer choices provided.*

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about what you have learned.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have learned and experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what was learned.

How did you use the answer choices that were provided to solve each question?

How would you have answered these questions if no answer choices were given?

Did you have to read the entire passage to answer these multiple-choice questions? What does your answer mean to you as a test taker?

Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Which of the previous Inquiry Activities that you had completed helped you with answering these multiple-choice questions?

How can the multiple-choice questions help you with the revision of the essay you will write for the GED?

Using one of your own essays as a passage, make some errors in the essay and use them in writing some multiple-choice questions, with answers.

Exchange essays and multiple-choice questions with a partner and answer each other's multiple-choice questions.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What kind of test-taking strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?

If you need more help with any writing issue that was tested in these multiple-choice questions, ask your instructor for more help.

Learning Project ❻ Answering the Multiple-Choice Questions

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)

Inquiry Activity 6-2: Multiple-Choice Questions – Set 2

1. Identifying the Problem

The Writing Learning Projects have 13 of the 25 multiple-choice questions embedded within the writing activities. The questions focused on in these two activities are those not already covered. These two activities can be used to develop test-taking strategies. Because the multiple-choice portion of the writing test can be confusing, with possible answers covering a wide range of issues, from spelling to punctuation to rewriting, you may find that some of your students will profit by devoting some time in developing strategies for approaching the test. The correct answers are starred in the teacher version.

In each of the Inquiry Activities in this Learning Project, you will explore one of the passages in the multiple-choice section of the GED practice test to develop test taking skills for this section of the Writing Test.

1. *In this Inquiry Activity we are going to concentrate on the thinking it takes to answer the multiple-choice questions on the GED Writing Test. You will use all of the rules for clear expression and mechanics that you have explored in all the Learning Projects up to this one.*
2. *You will also be asked to develop test-taking strategies that use the knowledge you have gained about effective sentence revision and mechanics in a multiple-choice situation.*

Trotter Institute of Electronics
"Training for the Future"

Mr. Carlos Montanez
286 Greencrest Street
Houston, TX 77001

Dear Mr. Montanez:

(A)

(1) What does it take to get a good job? (2) You probably have read newspaper articles about how job opportunities are declining today. (3) At the same time, however there are occupations in which opportunities are expanding. (4) The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics gave the following report. (5) The report states that in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by 21 percent. (6) As an electronics technician, you can expect to have your choice of many high-paying jobs with excellent working conditions. (7) That means that for every 10 electronics technicians now working, two more will be needed.

(B)

(8) One of the best aspects of an electronics education was that you don't ever have to leave home to get one. (9) The Trotter Institute of Electronics, offers a one-year correspondence course that leads straight to a Certificate of Electronics. (10) You could soon be on your way to a career in electronics. (11) A career filled with excitement and promise.

(C)

(12) You probably think that any course offered by the Trotter Institute would be expensive. (13) Because you get textbooks, assignments, and consultation for only $450.00, and this includes employment counseling after you graduate, this will surprise you. (14) You can see now that getting a better job is easier than you thought.

(D)

(15) To prepare for a better job with a great future, complete the enclosed registration form. (16) Within 10 days, you'll move toward an interesting and rewarding new career. (17) As mentioned above in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by dramatic proportions. (18) Don't wait to take advantage of this exciting career opportunity.

Yours truly,

Michael T. Langford

Michael T. Langford
Admissions Counselor

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3. ***Scan** the whole passage to get an indication of what the passage is about. Do not read word for word, or try to find errors, or try to correct anything. Just scan the passage.*

4. ***Scan** the multiple-choice questions only. Don't read the answer choices at this time.*

Questions 11 through 18 refer to the following recruitment letter. Questions missing have been covered in other Learning Projects.

14. Sentence 8: **One of the best aspects of an electronics education was that you don't ever have to leave home to get one.**

    Which correction should be made to sentence 8?
    (1) replace was with should be
    (2) change was to is *
    (3) replace was with being
    (4) replace ever with never
    (5) change to leave to to have left

18. Sentence 17: **As mentioned above in the next 10 years the demand for electronics technicians will increase by dramatic proportions.**

    Which correction should be made to sentence 17?
    (1) replace As mentioned with By mentioning
    (2) insert a comma after above *
    (3) change will increase to increasing
    (4) insert a comma after increase
    (5) no correction is necessary

Here are problem-clarification questions or directions you may want to consider when "Identifying the Problem" in the Language Arts, Writing Test.

Scan the passage:

What type of written communication is the passage?

Why do you think this passage was written?

How is the passage organized?

Why are the paragraphs lettered and the sentences numbered?

Read the sentence the question focuses on:

For each question, read the whole sentence or sentences and not just the underlined part, if any.

Find the paragraph in the passage in which the each sentence appears and scan that paragraph.

Note what may stand out in each sentence in the way that it is written.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so that you can remember to use them when you take the writing test.

Read the question:

What is the question asking you to do or to find out about the sentence?

What information in the sentence itself might be relevant to answering the question?

Scan the answer choices:

1. How would you describe these answer choices to someone else by just looking at them?

2. Read the answer choices to each question. What do you see in the answer choices?

- *How are the answer choices different from each other?*
- *How are they the same?*

3. What do the answer choices tell you about the question that was asked? About the sentence or sentences focused on?

4. What do you know about the areas of grammar or style that the answer choices in each problem represent?

5. What do you know about taking a multiple-choice writing test?

6. How do you plan to take this portion of the test?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Try to answer the multiple-choice questions any way you can, even if you have to guess, but try to be aware of the reasoning and thinking steps that you are using. The following questions and strategies can be helpful.

Planning: *Use your experience with similar sentences to make sense of this one.*

Doing the Work: *Answer the following questions or do the following activities:*

- *Read the first question carefully and try to correct the sentence without referring to the answer choices.*
- *Read the answer choices for the first question, choose one of the answer choices, and record the steps you used to choose the answer.*
- *Follow the same procedure for each of the remaining questions.*
- *Compare the multiple-choice answer you chose as correct with the answer you selected without looking at the answer choices. How similar are the two answers?*

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: *In your small group, compare your answers to each question to others in the group and explain why you chose each answer and how you found it. Compare the process each group member used to analyze the test question before studying the answer choices carefully. Agree on a process you might use during the writing portion of the test. Agree on the correct answer.*

For each question, discuss why each of the other answer choices are incorrect, and discuss what each group member learned about answering multiple-choice questions in the writing test.

Whole Class: *Report to the class the different ways the group members found the correct answer for each question. Discuss the reasons why the other answer choices are incorrect for each question, and describe the process your group decided could be used to determine an answer before reading the answer choices.*

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

***Reflecting:* Think about how well you understood what you have done.**

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How did you use the answer choices that were provided to solve each question?

How would you have answered these questions if no answer choices were given?

Did you have to read the entire passage to answer these multiple-choice questions? Explain.

What does this mean for you as a test taker?

***Extending:* Extend what you learned to new situations.**

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

Which of the previous Inquiry Activities that you had completed helped you with answering these multiple-choice questions?

How can the multiple-choice questions help you with the revision of the essay you will write for the GED?

Using one of your own essays as a passage, make some errors in the essay and write some multiple-choice questions, with answers.

Exchange essays and multiple-choice questions with a partner and answer each other's multiple-choice questions.

***Evaluating:* Assess what you learned and how you learned it.**

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What kind of test-taking strategies did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?

If you need more help with any writing issue that was tested in these multiple-choice questions, ask your instructor for more help.

Appendix A – The GED Scoring Guide

The Four-Point Scoring Guide for Essay Evaluation

The definitions of the four-point scoring guide as it applies to Well-Focused Main Points (or Response to the Prompt) are:

	1 Inadequate	2 Marginal	3 Adequate	4 Effective
	Reader has difficulty identifying or following writer's ideas.	Reader occasionally has difficulty understanding or following the writer's ideas.	Reader understands writer's ideas.	Reader understands and easily follows the writer's expression of ideas.
Response to the Prompt	Attempts to address prompt but with little or no success in establishing a focus.	Addresses the prompt, though the focus may shift.	Uses the writing prompt to establish a main idea.	Presents a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt.
Clear Organization	Fails to organize ideas.	Shows some evidence of an organizational plan.	Uses identifiable organizational plan.	Establishes a clear and logical organization.
Development and Details	Demonstrates little or no development; usually lacks details or examples or presents irrelevant information.	Has some development but lacks specific details; may be limited to a listing, repetitions, or generalizations.	Has focused but occasionally uneven development; incorporates some specific detail.	Achieves coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples.
Conventions of Edited American English	May exhibit minimal or no control of sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	May demonstrate inconsistent control of sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	Generally controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.	Consistently controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.
Word Choice	Exhibits weak and/or inappropriate words.	Exhibits a narrow range of word choice, often including inappropriate selections.	Exhibits appropriate word choice.	Exhibits varied and precise word choice.

Appendix A *(continued)*

The Writing Test

Part I: The Multiple-Choice

Types of Documents	Item Content Areas	Item Types
• Business communications • How To texts • Informational texts	• Organization (15%); • Sentence Structure (30%); • Usage (30%); • Mechanics (25%)	• Correction (45%); • Revision (35%); • Construction shift (20%)

Part II: The Writing Sample

200-250 word essay	**A bias-free, succinct generic topic**	**Four-point scoring rubric**

Writing Test Skills

Organization	Sentence Structure	Mechanics	Spelling
• Effective text divisions within paragraphs and within multiparagraph documents • Effective topic sentences • Unity and coherence	• Fragments, run-ons • Comma splice • Improper subordination • Dangling and misplaced modifiers • Lack of parallelism	• **Capitalization:** proper names and adjectives, titles, months, seasons • **Punctuation:** commas in series, between independent clauses joined by a conjunction, after introductory elements, with appositives, overuse of commas	Distinguish spelling in possessives, contractions, and homonyms

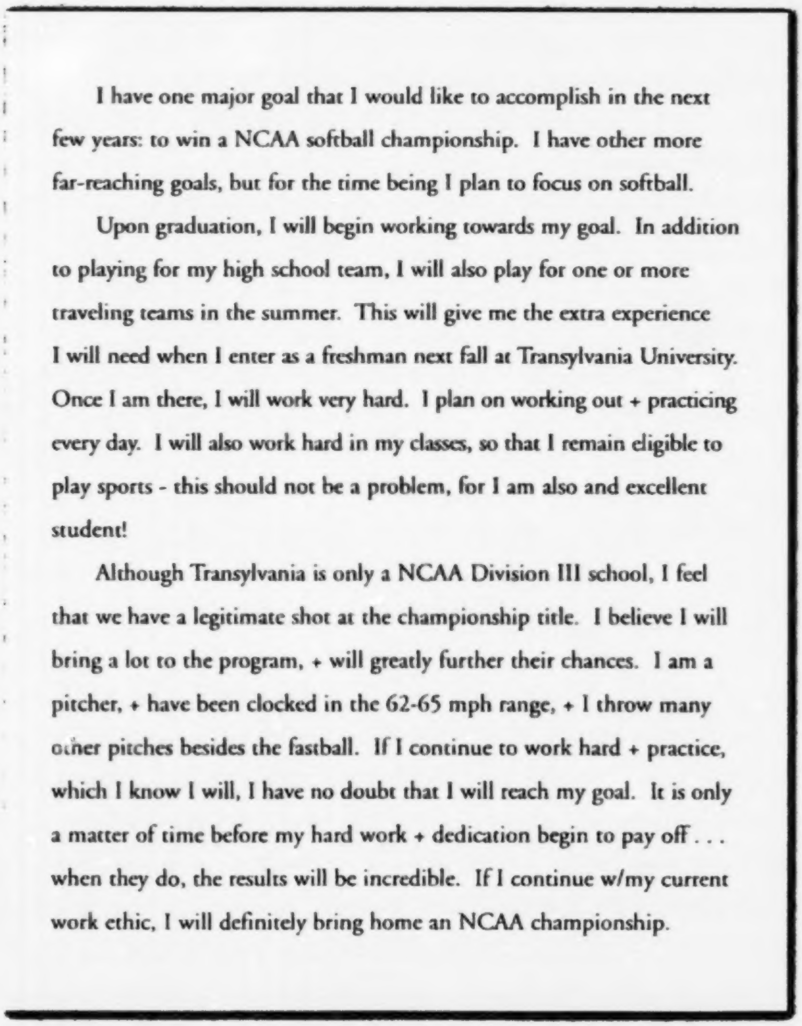
Appendix B – Sample Essays

Topic C

What is one important goal you would like to achieve in the next few years?

In your essay, identify that goal. Explain how you plan to achieve it. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

Essay #1



I have one major goal that I would like to accomplish in the next few years: to win a NCAA softball championship. I have other more far-reaching goals, but for the time being I plan to focus on softball.

Upon graduation, I will begin working towards my goal. In addition to playing for my high school team, I will also play for one or more traveling teams in the summer. This will give me the extra experience I will need when I enter as a freshman next fall at Transylvania University. Once I am there, I will work very hard. I plan on working out + practicing every day. I will also work hard in my classes, so that I remain eligible to play sports - this should not be a problem, for I am also and excellent student!

Although Transylvania is only a NCAA Division III school, I feel that we have a legitimate shot at the championship title. I believe I will bring a lot to the program, + will greatly further their chances. I am a pitcher, + have been clocked in the 62-65 mph range, + I throw many other pitches besides the fastball. If I continue to work hard + practice, which I know I will, I have no doubt that I will reach my goal. It is only a matter of time before my hard work + dedication begin to pay off . . . when they do, the results will be incredible. If I continue w/my current work ethic, I will definitely bring home an NCAA championship.

Score: 3

Appendix B – Sample Essays *(continued)*

Essay #2

I have a number of goals that I would like to achieve in the next few years. I would like to write a novel, marry my girlfriend, and get a good job. Before any of that happens, however, I want to achieve a different goal for my future: graduating college.

Many might view college as simply one huge, final party before we are thrust out upon the "real world." I, on the other hand, view college as a way of preparing myself for that real world, rather than simply a drunken orgy of reckless chaos. I'm not saying I don't look forward to the party aspect, but I'm going to college not just to have a good time, but to ready myself for the future.

In order to do this, I plan on studying at least an hour every day on subjects I'm not quite as sure in as I'd like to be. If I need more time, then so be it. I like to think that I have a good grasp of most subjects and with studying I am certain I can maintain the 3.5 average needed to renew my scholarship. Also, I plan on spending some time on matters that expand one's mind, such as reading and doing research on the Internet.

Of course, it's much easier to do well in a subject you're interested in, so I plan on majoring in computer-aided graphic design. I am good with computers, and I enjoy being creative and artistic. I have worked with computer graphics programs before, such as Microsoft Image Composer, and look forward to doing more in that area. As it is my prospective career, I believe that area of study will not only be enjoyable, but profitable.

I have heard many things about college. Some say it is insanely difficult; others claim it isn't bad at all. I believe college, like life, is what you make of it. I intend on making my college life not only enjoyable, but an experience that will help me for the rest of my life.

Score: 3

Appendix B – Sample Essays *(continued)*

Essay #3

During my senior year, I have decided what I am going to do after I graduate. The Army came + talked to us about what all this branch of the military has to offer, so therefore I looked deeply into all the benefits it had to offer. After spending a couple weeks deciding + conferencing with my parents, they both decided that joining the military would be a great decision.

Now I'm an E-1 private in the US Army. I am leaving in August of 2000 to go to basic. From there I will leave to go to Texas to pursue in my career field: a Dental Specialist.

Within the next few years, I hope to be successfully going in my military career. I am in for 6 years, + may even renew my time if everything goes smoothly. I've earned $19,500 for college, and I can go anywhere I want just about.

So by the time my Army time is finished, I will be successfully doing good, + maybe I will have a family.

Score: 1

Appendix B – Sample Essays *(continued)*

Essay #4

In the next few years, I plan to go to a Technical Institute, or an Automotive college. I'm always doing car work with friends and now I would like to do this on a full-time Basis. To have the knowledge I want, I'm willing to go to a technical institute. To make my knowledge a little Better, I Attended some courses in high school Like: Ag, Mechanics, Auto care, and Auto Mechanics I. I took the courses to get a Better Idea on how Mechanics work.

Over a span of about five years, I've watched my father work on his cars and even helped him on a few. By doing this, I have Learned how I can diagnois an engine problem, for instance, Listen for problems, and eye the engine, and also by a Code Reader. By going to a technical Institute, I hope to get myself ready for the real world and or to achieve my goal of Becoming a mechanic.

By only having three weeks of school left, I hope that I will have already decided to go or not. But If I decide not to go, I can always go in a few years or more depending on If I'm ready to try or not.

Score: 2

Appendix B – Sample Essays *(continued)*

Essay #5

Over the next few years, my main goal is to obtain a college degree from St. Johns University in Collegville. This goal will be very difficult to obtain and I will need to work hard at it. Three things that will affect the outcome of my goal are: how much money I can raise to pay for it, how much time I am willing to spend studying, and my dedication in training for football.

Before you can register at a college, you must consider how it is going to be paid for. This is especially an issue at St. Johns, because the tuition is around $22,000 a year. This is a huge sum of money. It is not made easier by the fact that my parents will be able to contribute very little towards my education. Thus I am forced to rely on scholarships, grants, and loans from the government and other agencies. I have already taken some action by applying for scholarships, but I will have to apply again next year. I received a $7,500 scholarship from St. Johns and they have also given my some grants. The rest of the money will have to come from student loans and an on campus job.

The next area that will affect my goal is the classroom. This is important because the main point of college is to prepare meself for a successful career. In college, I will need to apply myself, and take time to study every night. Sometimes, I may be forced to give up things that I would rather do, but I must if I am going to achieve my goal. I must create a relationship with my professors because they will help me obtain the information that is needed to be successful.

The third thing is my dedication in training for football. Football is my favorite sport and St. Johns has an excellent football tradition. They have 150 players out for football each year. If I am going to be successful and contribute to the team, I am going to have to be dedicated to training. I must spend timeless hours in the weight room gaining strength and quickness. I believe all of the hard work will pay off.

If I can do these three things, I will successfully complete my goal of graduating from college. If this goal is achieved, I believe I will be well on my way to a successful life.

Score: 4

Appendix C

5 Tips for Improving Peer Review

Before you begin the peer review sections of the Writing Learning Projects, review *GED as Project Volume 1: GED and You* with your learners. Remind learners that they are not in the class to criticize or be criticized, but to help and be helped. *GED as Project* is rooted in the philosophy that more and better learning can occur within a community of learners. Learners should become comfortable talking about their own writing and the writing of their peers. A peer review should be a positive experience.
Below are some rules for making a peer review session work for your learners.

1) Every writer should be thanked for sharing his or her writing.

This should be a class rule. Before readers respond to a writer, they should thank the writer for having the courage to share a piece of writing by simply saying, "Thank you for sharing this with me." It may seem odd at first, but saying these few words before reviewing a piece of writing sets a positive tone for the rest of the review. Writers like feeling thanked for something they have created, even if it is a thanks brought about by a classroom rule.

2) Showing

Showing is an easy first step to get peer review started. Some readers may find it difficult to talk about a piece of writing. Showing is a mechanical way of making a writer aware of how his or her writing affects readers.

To perform a showing exercise:

a) Readers should underline words or phrases that stick out to them as being particularly well-written or meaningful, and they should circle words or phrases they do not understand or think could be improved.
b) When responding to the writer, readers should always start with the positive. They should begin by showing the writer the underlined words or phrases – the parts of the writing that work. Then, the readers can follow by pointing out the words and phrases they circled – the parts of the writing that need to be improved.
c) No explanations should be given. They are not necessary. Just have the readers show the writer what they liked and understood and what they didn't understand.

3) Telling

Have the readers tell a story of what happened to them as they read the piece of writing and have them use specific examples from the writing. Here's an example: "When I started reading, I laughed at the joke you put at the beginning. I like funny writing. As I kept reading, I enjoyed the part where you talked about your mother, but I was confused about your mother's relationship with her sister. At the end, I like the way you talked about yourself. You used some jokes that I laughed at."

In this example, the writer can see that his joke at the beginning worked for the reader. The joke helped set the mood for the rest of the passage. Later, the reader points out that she was confused by the part about the writer's mother. This is also valuable. Something in the way the writer wrote his words was not clear to his reader. He needs to revisit this part of the essay and make it clearer to his readers.

Telling is a great exercise. If a writer can get 3 or 4 people to do a telling exercise with his writing, he can get a clearer understanding of how his writing affects other people. It's easy for a writer to know what he wants to say, but having the writing make sense for a reader is a more difficult task to master.

Appendix C *(continued)*

4) Summarizing

In summarizing, have the readers move through a process of summarization in which they begin summarizing with many words and end up summarizing with one word. Here's how it works:

a) Have the readers summarize a piece of writing in no more than 5 sentences.
b) Then, have the readers summarize the piece of writing with 1 sentence.
c) Next, have the readers choose one word that describes the writing. This can be any word from anywhere.
d) End by having the readers choose one word from the passage that they feel holds the most meaning or tells the most about the passage.

This exercise can be difficult. It requires a lot of thought, but it will be beneficial to both the readers and writers. Readers will gain a new perspective on gleaning meaning from a piece of writing. For writers, the summarization reveals what the readers saw as the most important pieces of the writing. Only those most important elements of a piece of writing can make it into such a short, concise summarization exercise.

5) Keep it positive.

Encourage learners to use positive phrasing when reviewing someone else's writing. It takes a lot of courage to share one's writing, and having it reviewed in a positive manner helps foster a sense of comfort and ease. Remind learners of the courage they demonstrate every time they share a piece of their writing. Also, talk to your learners about the amount of pain and hurt that can occur when cruel or thoughtless comments are made about a classmate's writing.

On the other hand, encourage your writers to remain silent during a review of their work. Readers should also feel comfortable in the peer review classroom. Having a writer lash out can cause readers to guard their comments or remain completely silent. Letting everyone's comments be heard is the best way for a writer to understand how his writing is working for other people. Ask that writers quietly listen to the readers and jot down notes based on the readers' responses. When everyone is finished responding, have the writer thank the readers for their feedback.

Appendix D

GEDTS Language Arts, Writing Frequently Asked Questions about the Essay

The following questions and answers summarize items referred to the GEDTS Writing Test Specialist regarding the essay requirements on the 2002-Series GED Language Arts, Writing Test.

Questions

1. *How are the GEDTS Language Arts, Writing Test essays scored?*
2. *What is the passing score for the essay? I have heard rumors that my state has a higher essay passing score?*
3. *When I receive my score, how can I tell if I earned a 2 or higher on my essay?*
4. *I remember how my teachers used to score essays in school. How do GED essay readers score papers? What do they consider the most important elements of good writing?*
5. *Will a specific number of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics lower my essay score?*
6. *What will the essay topic ask me to do? Can I find out what past topics have been on the writing test? Do I need any prior preparation for the essay?*
7. *When I took the Official GED Practice Test, I found that the essay question was not really a question?*
8. *Does GED offer programs to help prepare GED candidates to write essays for the Language Arts, Writing Test? Where can I get help with writing essays?*
9. *The older form of the GED Writing Test provided a recommended word count for the essay. How long does my essay have to be?*
10. *Writing textbooks will not always agree on the same point. For example, one book will tell writers to use a comma after each item in a series (e.g. coffee, eggs, juice, and toast), but another book might tell writers to omit the last comma before the conjunction (e.g. coffee, eggs, juice and toast.). Which is correct? Will essay readers give me a lower score?*
11. *The GEDTS essay scoring guide refers to "the conventions of EAE." What is EAE?*

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1. How are the GEDTS Language Arts, Writing Test essays scored?

As of January 2002, GED Language Arts, Writing Test essays are scored on a four-point holistic scale.

Two trained essay readers read each essay and score based on the overall impression. The overall impression of each paper is based on five areas:

- Does the paper respond to the assigned prompt--did the examinee use the topic on the test?
- Can the reader see or follow an organized plan for development?
- Are there specific and relevant details to support the paper's focus?
- Are the conventions of language (grammar, usage, and mechanics) generally followed?
- Is the word choice precise, varied, and appropriate?

The two readers' scores are then averaged. If the essay receives a score of 2 or higher, the essay score is combined with the multiple-choice score to form a composite. If an examinee receives on the essay a score of "1" or "1.5," there will be no composite score, and the examinee must retake both the multiple-choice and essay.

Appendix D *(continued)*

Please note that individual essay scores are not reported. On the composite score, the multiple-choice results represent 65% of the composite, and the essay represents 35%.

Essay readers may not be more than one point apart in their scoring. In those cases where the readers are more than one point apart, the Chief Reader for the scoring site will set the score by agreeing with the reader whose score follows the GEDTS scale.

2. What is the passing score for the essay? I have heard rumors that my state has a higher essay passing score?

A GED candidate must earn a score of 2 or higher on the Language Arts, Writing, Part II essay in order to receive a composite score and obtain a passing score.

The rumors circulated about a 3 being the passing score are *wrong*. A candidate needs a 2 or higher to earn a passing score. States may set a composite passing score (multiple-choice and essay) that is higher than the current GED passing score of 410. The composite passing score can not be set lower than the GEDTS standard.

3. When I receive my score, how can I tell if I earned a 2 or higher on my essay?

If you received a score on your transcript in the range of 200-800 (but it will be a number less than 410), you would have earned a 2 (minimum passing score on the 4-pt. scale) on your essay. However, you did not score high enough on the multiple-choice to pass to earn the composite passing score of 410.

If you received a "0" or a single (*) or (**) asterisk on your transcript, then you did not earn a 2 on your essay. Note: A single asterisk (*) indicates that you did not write on the assigned topic, and your response was recorded as "off topic."

If it was your essay score that kept you from passing, you will still have to retake both parts of the Language Arts, Writing Test. We highly recommend that you seek some additional preparation before retaking the test. You may want to check out the Steck-Vaughn website www.steck-vaughn.com

GED candidates can find other preparation guides at their local libraries, bookstores, and on Amazon.com

4. I remember how my teachers used to score essays in school. How do GED essay readers score papers? What do they consider the most important elements of good writing?

Good writing needs a focus, organization, and development with specific and relevant examples, details, explanations, etc. You'll see these elements at the top of our scoring grid. Our readers are especially concerned with the development that supports a focus. They do not, however, look for specific errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics – they don't score with the same elements in mind that a classroom teacher would.

Essay readers score approximately 30 papers in an hour; therefore, "Read and score" is the motto of an essay reader. Errors in grammar, etc. would affect a score only if they are so numerous and hinder the reader from understanding and following the writer's ideas. Consequently, writers need to minimize errors, so these mistakes don't distract the readers from the ideas in the paper.

Appendix D *(continued)*

5. Will a specific number of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics lower my essay score?

Readers spend approximately 2 minutes per essay, reading for an overall impression. The points on the scoring grid shape that overall impression.

If there are a sufficient number of errors (this number will differ from reader to reader) causing the reader to have difficulty understanding and following the writer's ideas, then those combined errors will affect the reader's score.

6. What will the essay topic ask me to do? Can I find out what past topics have been on the writing test? Do I need any prior preparation for the essay?

Examinees will be asked to write on a topic of general interest. The topics are brief and generally ask the examinees to state their views and support with examples from their own observation, knowledge, or experience.

We don't release our topics; however, Steck-Vaughn (adult ed. publisher) produces our practice tests, and they have materials to help GED teachers and candidates. For example, their Practice Test Administrator's Manual has two GED topics, anchor papers for each topic, and 10-15 sample essays with commentary. They also produce a CD-Rom developed by GEDTS to train teachers how to score their students' papers using the four-pt. scale. You may want to check out the Steck-Vaughn website www.steck-vaughn.com

GED candidates can find other preparation guides at their local libraries, bookstores, and on amazon.com

7. When I took the Official GED Practice Test, I found that the essay question was not really a question?

Although called the "Essay Question," it is really a prompt "to prompt" or help you begin to write about a topic. All of our topics are general enough that you will only need your own knowledge, experience, or observations to respond. The topics are expository in nature.

8. Does GED offer programs to help prepare GED candidates to write essays for the Language Arts, Writing Test? Where can I get help with writing essays?

We only develop the tests for the states and Canadian provinces and do not offer test preparation. We strongly urge you, especially if you have been away from academic writing for some time, to enroll in a review course and take the Official GED Practice Test so that you can get feedback on your writing. There are several study guides available in local bookstores and libraries.

You may also want to check our website: www.gedtest.org (go to the section marked "Resources for Prospective GED Test-Takers").

Or you may call 1-800-636-9433 (My GED) to locate the nearest testing center to you. The center can tell you where to find an instructional program.

Appendix D *(continued)*

9. The older form of the GED Writing Test provided a recommended word count for the essay. How long does my essay have to be?

Your essay score is not based on a word count. So you will not necessarily fail if you have fewer than 200 words. For the 2002 series GED tests, the suggested word count was omitted. The word count was intended as a guide, not a requirement. However, we found examinees focusing more on the count than the presentation and development of ideas. In fact, writers would record the number of words at points in the text.

The only requirement for the essay's length is that it must be written on the 2 sides of the answer sheet. Essay readers will not read additional pages.

---

10. Writing textbooks will not always agree on the same point. For example, one book will tell writers to use a comma after each item in a series (e.g. coffee, eggs, juice, and toast), but another book might tell writers to omit the last comma before the conjunction (e.g. coffee, eggs, juice and toast.). Which is correct? Will essay readers give me a lower score?

Both of the comma use instances that you cite are correct. Most English teachers will agree that the comma before the "and' is optional; however, the writer must be consistent. If the writer omits the comma before "and," he must omit it every time there are three or more items in a series. Likewise, if the comma is used, the writer must use it in all cases. Consistency is the key.

When our trained readers are reading the essays for a score, they are looking for an overall impression, not individual errors. Grammar, usage, and mechanics errors will affect a reader's score if there are a sufficient number of errors that collectively make it difficult for the reader to understand or follow the writer's ideas. Therefore, the two applications of the comma for the last item in a series would not affect the reader's score.

As a side note, multiple-choice items on Language Arts, Writing, Part I will not test the comma use between the next to last and last item. However, the comma between items one and two (in a series of three or more items) will be tested.

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11. The GEDTS essay scoring guide refers to "the conventions of EAE." What is EAE?

Edited American English (EAE) is fundamentally the same as Standard Written English (SWE), i.e. those conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics that writers and speakers adhere to in order to communicate effectively. In 1997, the Writing Test Specifications Committee in planning for the 2002-Series GED Tests aligned itself with the National Council of Teachers of English who use EAE as the norm for the variety of English that is most used by educated speakers of the language.

For writers, the significance is that they must still employ a style, grammar, and usage that allows a mutual level of comprehension and understanding among educated speakers and writers. For example, EAE still governs when to use who or whom, is or are, pronoun forms, verb form and verb tense, adjective or adverb forms, parallel constructions, and sentence structure – basically, only the name has changed.

One reason for the change is perception. Any writing that is not standard is, therefore, substandard. The change to the term EAE offsets the negative impact that an examinee may feel in interpreting his or her writing as substandard. The Committee wanted to remove any impediment that may negatively impact an examinee's performance.

If you have a question that has not been answered, please contact: John Reier, GEDTS Writing Test Specialist • One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 250 • Washington, DC 20036 • (202) 939-9480 • john_reier@ace.nche.edu

Appendix E

A Resource List for Writing and Teaching Writing

Britton, James, et al. *The Development of Writing Abilities* (11-18). London: Macmillan Education, 1975.

Brooke, Robert. *Writing and Sense of Self: Identity Negotiation in Writing Workshops.* Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1991.

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Burke, Jim. *Reader's Handbook: A Student Guide for Reading and Learning.* Wilmington, MA: Great Source, 2002.

Coles, William E., Jr. *The Plural I: The Teaching of Writing.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook, 1988.

Corbett, Edward P. J., Nancy Myers, and Gary Tate. *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook.* 4th ed. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000.

Elbow, Peter. *Everyone Can Write: Essays Toward a Hopeful Theory of Writing and Teaching Writing.* New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000.

Elbow, Peter. *Writing with Power.* New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981.

Elbow, Peter. *Writing without Teachers.* New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973.

Elbow, Peter and Pat Belanoff. *Sharing and Responding.* Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2000.

Enos, Theresa, ed. *A Sourcebook for Basic Writing Teachers.* New York: Random House, 1987.

Harris, Jeanette. *Expressive Discourse.* Dallas: Southern Methodist Univ. Press, 1990.

Hunter, Susan, and Ray Wallace, eds. *The Place of Grammar in Writing Instruction: Past, Present, Future.* Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann-Boynton/Cook, 1995.

Macrorie, Ken. *Telling Writing.* Rochelle Park, N.J.: Hayden, 1970.

Murray, Donald M. *The Craft of Revision.* Boston: Thomson/Heinle, 1997.

Patrick Sebranek, Verne Meyer, and Dave Kemper. *Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing &Learning.* Lexington, MA: Write Source, 1996.

Shaughnessy, Mina P. *Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing.* New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977.

Shor, Ira. *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life.* Boston: South End Press, 1980.

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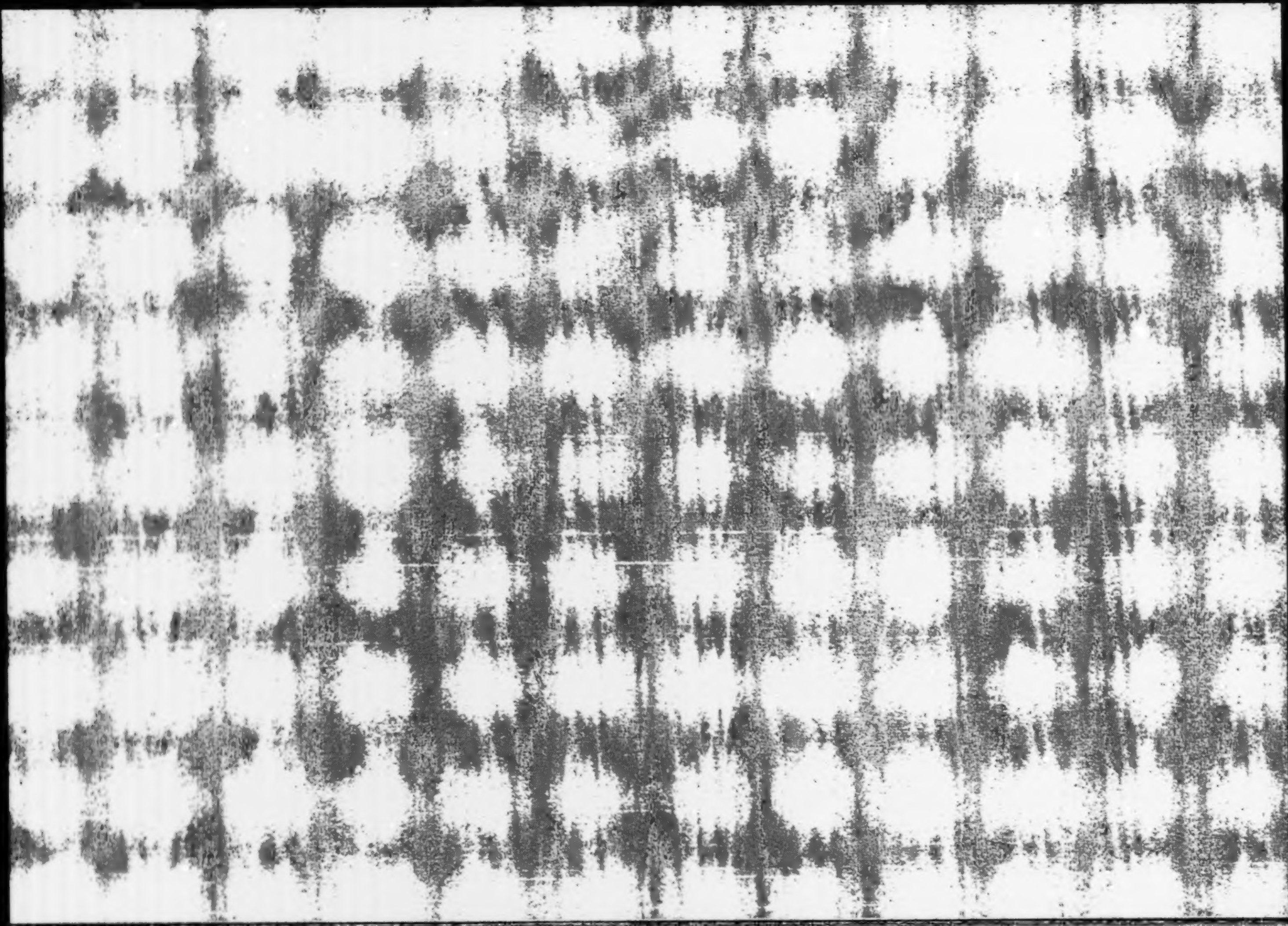
White, Edward M. *Teaching and Assessing Writing.* 2nd ed. San Francisco and London: Jossey-Bass, 1994.

Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.



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